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This is to certify that the Research Work  
embodied in the Thesis entitled, "History of the Revenue  
Settlements in Bundelkhand (1804-1947)" submitted for the  
Degree of Ph.D. in History is the original Research Work  
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**HISTORY OF- THE REVENUE  
SETTLEMENTS IN BUNDELKHAND  
FROM  
1804 TO 1947**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED FOR  
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY  
IN HISTORY**

**PRESENTED BY :**

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## PREFACE

The present work is an attempt to study the British Land Revenue Settlements which were imposed by them on Bundelkhand from 1804 when they acquired possession of the province, until 1947, when India became independent.

Not much work has been done in this field and this study makes only a marginal contribution to that end. The effects of the revenue policies and also of the settlements, had far reaching consequences on the agrarian economy of this region.

The reasons for the area remaining backward till today, may be traced back to those economic policies formulated by the British and the changes they instituted to meet their interests.

Prior to the English rule in Bundelkhand, issues of land revenue, rights in land, land produce were linked with the state or rule. The mutual economic relations which existed between the various classes were inseparably associated with the authority wielding control over the area. The Governmental machinery also performed the task of administration and collection of revenue in the state.

With the advent of the British rule, a new era dawned with the innovation of new concepts of proprietorship, land revenue settlements and tenures all of which ushered a revolution in the agrarian scene. The British mainly concentrated on commercial and economic interests which formed the pivotal

on the commercial and economic interests which formed the <sup>pivotal</sup> basis of their power. Consequently, the earlier years of their rule were devoted to acquiring surplus revenue for trade. Taking advantage of their position, they penetrated down to the deepest echelons of rural organisation to achieve this goal.

In due course revenue settlements were made, which were excessively high. Further, the rigorous methods of revenue collections combined with natural calamities and the new agrarian order inflicted unprecedented hardships on cultivators who were over burdened with debts and mortgages. This had a ruinous effect on the economic prosperity of the region in so far that cultivators abandoned agriculture, sold off their land to pay the debts or even migrated to neighbouring states of Malwa, Doab and even Gujarat.

In fact one of the fundamental causes of discontentment in the uprising of 1857, was the incidence of high land revenue. Ironically, this practice of high taxation was not abandoned even after 1857. The people were burdened with heavy assessments for their active participation in the uprising. The plausible explanation may be that it was the British intention to cripple Bundelkhand economically, so that, the ideas of nurturing or sustaining another uprising were stifled and the province was divested of all means of regaining its prosperity and pristine glory.

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## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

Bundelkhand has had a glorious and turbulent past. It has been in the limelight of Indian history since ancient times because of its strategic geographical position. This region is a watershed between the northern and southern half of the sub-continent. Parts of Bundelkhand came under the British administration in the early 19th century. They included Jhansi (inclusive of Lalitpur), Jalaun, Banda and Hamirpur. The revenue settlements made in these territories from 1804 to 1947, is the subject, under present study.

The absence of original source material makes it difficult to analyse the revenue settlements in the earlier years. The difficulty was faced by early settlements officers who had to prepare fresh records after the establishment of peace and order in 1858.(1) In order to have a clear perspective of the subject it is essential to bear in mind the system prevalent in the state, prior to the advent of the British era.

In the late 18th century, the political and economic situation was made complex with the breaking down of the Mugal rule. (2) The emergence of splinter states and the inability of the central authority to continue a strong administration had adverse effects on the agrarian economy of Bundelkhand.

Under the Mughals, a systematic land revenue system had been evolved and the revenue demand varied according to the

produce of the land.(3) The peasant was not subjected to tyranny as far as revenue extraction was concerned. But with the decline of the Mugal administration, the 'zabti' system,(4) (that is the regular mode of assessment which had developed under Akbar) of assessment, gave way to a summary manner of assessment resulting in varying revenue demands.(5) Agrarian disturbances gradually mounted. The 'contracts revenue system' was also being replaced. The amount of revenue from land was declining, new zamindars and proprietors of land were being created. Villages were depopulated and agriculture was in a pathetic condition.

The Marathas who wielded authority in the region, displayed "incompetent indifference" and their only interest was to collect whatever revenue they could. Interest in promotion of agriculture was devoid in their attitude towards land (6).

The most important question was that, of the position of cultivators in the pre-British era, where the former contributed in the paying of revenue but this did not signify his right in the soil.(7)

The establishment of British rule brought significant changes in the region. In the initial years the main motive of the East India Company in dealing with territories that fell into its grasp was to exact large revenue as quickly as possible. Consequently, land revenue settlements were conducted with the landed aristocracy, but this did not prove economically beneficial. The English then turned to the peasant proprietors to achieve their goal of rapid capital accumulation. In pursuance of

this, they endeavoured to promote agriculture through law and administration, but the problem facing them in these initial years was the lack of an agricultural policy.(8)

The British then sought to evolve a policy which would harmonize existing tradition and customs with their own interests, for a smooth functioning of the revenue settlements. Factors such as vagaries of weather, the peculiarities of bhaichara tenure which caused friction among co-sharers, fall in agricultural prices and the question of legality of new owners were pertinent issues in these new revenue settlements.(9)

Following the imposition of these settlements, a crisis was created, which was grave in nature.(10) The question is, whether this crisis which occurred after the imposition of the settlements was a consequence of the over assessment pure and simple, or whether over assessment was only apparent and behind it lay concealed, certain economic and other factors which made the pressure of assessment upon the people an intolerable one.(11)

The early settlements of 1815 - 16 to 1819 - 20 considerably increased the revenue, but this pressure on land was further aggravated by the factors mentioned earlier. The high assessment of Waring, Erskine and later of Cadell created hardships for the people and brought severe strain upon agriculturists. All these found expression in unrealistic arrears and a declining 'Jama' also called 'Khiraj'.(12)

The Board of Revenue offered explanations of the situation in Bundelkhand by stating that if the situation in

Bundelkhand had been otherwise, the country would have been in a position to pay the full assessment.(13) Arguments they put forth to justify their course of actions, were that, towards the end of a settlement, zamindars had a tendency to encourage the decline of cultivation in order to obtain a reduction of the jama in a new settlement. But the question is that, if that was so, then why did innumerable zamindars have to see that their 'estates' were managed or handed over to revenue farmers? In fact the Board did not recognise the economic reasons combined with factors such as the peculiarity of tenure, weather etc., as responsible for the crisis in Bundelkhand.

After consideration of local reports it was acknowledged that the high pressure of jama was detrimental for agricultural interests and subsequently, recommendations were made for its reduction.(14)

In the post 1857 period when regular settlements were introduced, the district fared no better. Revision of settlements became imminent and no settlements could run its full duration. Consequently, the Government introduced the fluctuating settlements in the light of the conditions which emerged.

Under the new administration, the position of cultivators changed. Only persons whose names were in the records were declared owners of the land, thereby the cultivators who had been cultivating from generations were thrown out, as new proprietors came into existence as they had acquired proprietary rights by purchasing land in the auction and sales.

Hence, the actual peasants were deprived of cultivating rights and subjected to abject poverty and misery which led to mass migrations.

What was the nature and character of the revenue settlements ? What was their impact and effect ? To what extent did the new system alter the position of zamindars and cultivators ? How did the tenure system change in Bundelkhand and the most complex question of Proprietary rights will be discussed in the following chapters. The revenue settlements of Bundelkhand were unique in themselves in that they were different from the revenue settlements Bengal and Madras.

#### B. A Critical Examination of the Source Material

The most important difficulty confronted in attempting the revenue history of the early years of the British period is the paucity of original records which were destroyed in the disturbances of 1857. Muslim and foreign writers were prejudiced with this region as the people of Bundelkhand were freedom loving and constantly tried to throw off any foreign domination. They always fought the British and Mughals. Hence these writers were not kindly disposed towards the people of Bundelkhand.

The settlement reports in the post 1857 period are an important source of information. These give us a varied and detailed account of the revenue settlements conducted by the officers designated by the administration to conduct the revenue survey in the districts of Jhansi, Lalitpur, Jalaun, Hamirpur

and Banda of Bundelkhand province. The first settlement report on Jhansi was compiled by E.G. Jenkinson (1871); the second by W.H.L. Impey and J.S. Meston exclusive of Lalitpur sub-division (1892); revision of Jhansi settlement inclusive of Lalitpur by A.W. Pim (1903) and the final settlement report of Jhansi district by H.T. Lane (1947).

The first report on the settlement of zilla Hamirpur was compiled by C. Allen and W. Muir (1842). The second settlement by W.E. Neale (1880) and the final report on the revision of settlement of Hamirpur district was done by W. Raw (1908).

Jalaun's first settlement report was written by A. H. Ternan (1870); the second was the revision of settlement of a certain portion by P. White (1889) and the final settlement report by H.C.R. Hailey (1906).

Report on the settlement of Lalitpur was compiled by J. Davidson (1859) and the final report on the revision of settlement and Lalitpur by H.S. Hoare (1899) has Lalitpur was incorporated into Jhansi in 1891.

The epic settlement report on Banda was by Alan Cadell (1881) and the final report was edited by E. de Humphries (1909).

The settlement reports were written by British officers who had not much knowledge of the local economic climate. They mainly based their survey on the facts and figures supplied to them by the Patwaris and Amils who were entrusted with the task of giving the information to the settlement officers. Hence some

of the material contained in the reports might not be wholly authentic. Moreover, the reports have not been impartially written. They have tried to exonerate themselves from the shortcomings of their policies which were responsible for the retardation of economic prosperity in the region and instead blamed the local population for the failings. However, inspite of these shortcomings these reports provide us with details of rent, rates, revenue, agricultural prices and economic conditions prevailing at that time.

The District Gazeteers are a secondary source of information. They contain factual information of British affairs in India, based on official statistics received from the district authorities. The earliest district gazeteer is the Statistical, Descriptive and Historical Account of north west provinces of India edited by E. Atkinson (1874). He based his gazeteer on the information received from the above authority. He did not stay in Bundelkhand to have a first hand knowledge or insight into the region and here lies the limitation of his work.

There are other gazeteers with information about the aforesaid districts, written later. e.g. D. L. Brockman's Disrtict Gazeteer series which contain almost the same information as Atkinson's. The revenue section is not based on his independent study but on the material of the settlement reports. Therefore they are again a mere factual record of the statistics related to the district. The aim of these gazeteers was to provide information and data to the British administrative officials who used to visit the district from time to time. The

gazeteers are a good source for socio-political information.

Among the secondary works, Baden Powell's book on Land Systems of British India (1892) is a major work on the British revenue policy in N.W. provinces. For purposes of general reading on land tenures and technical aspects of land revenue administration the book is of interest. Powell was an administrator and did not have time to analyse or go into research on this vast subject. The book does not deal specifically with issues relating to Bundelkhand and makes only casual references.

Dr. Sulekh Chand Gupta's book on Agrarian Relations and Early British Rule published in 1963 covers the Ceded and Conquered Provinces (1801 - 1833). The book deals with the land revenue policy, its formation and growth in the early years. However, there is no special emphasis laid on the problems of this region. Reference to Bundelkhand comes under the purview of 'ceded' province.

Dr. Imtiaz Husain's book, British Land Revenue Policy in Northern India - the Ceded and Conquered Provinces (1801 - 1833) published (1967) is a milestone in the economic history of British India. The book deals with the evolution, formation and development of the British Land Revenue Policies in the territories mentioned. But again Bundelkhand is not the region under specific discussion.

The material for study has been obtained mainly from the contemporary official Revenue Records; the Bundelkhand Agency English Files; Proceedings - Foreign Political; Political

despatches from Court of Directors; Land Revenue Records, Crown Representative Records (microfilm); Settlement Records; Gazeteers and Historical Works.

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Chapter 2  
A GEOGRAPHICAL AND BRIEF HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF  
BUNDELKHAND UPTO 1804.

Section - A : GEOGRAPHY

a. Area & Topography.

The territory, known as Bundelkhand comprised of the region which lay between the R. Jumna on the north, R. Chambal on the north west, Jabalpur and Sagar on the south, part of Gwalior on the west, Baghelkhand and Mirzapur hills on the south and east. It extended from 77 48' to 81 33' east longitude and 24 3' to 26 26' north latitude.(1) It included the district of Jhansi in the west, Jaloun in the north, Hamirpur and Banda in the east, Damoh and Sagar in the south.(2) Lalitpur was incorporated into Jhansi in 1891, which ended its separate entity.(3) The area of Bundelkhand was spread over 23, 817 sq. miles, 165 miles in length and 232 in breadth.(4) It is essentially an enormous plain which is diversified by a series of mountains and hills.(5) These plains are crowned with mountains and the remarkable aspect is the progressive elevation of the soil from the bed of the R. Jumna towards the Jumna.(6) It is from the south that the plains start widening(7) and it is here that the hills approach them within a few miles, but they are several miles apart in the north.(8) Ravines cut up these plains in the Jalaun, Jhansi and Lalitpur district. The area which borders the Jumna, Pahuj, Betwa and Dhasan rivers are ravinous and therefore uncultivable.(9)

*Bundelkhand is intersected by numerous rivers and ravines prominent among which are the Jumna, Chambal, Betwa, Dhasan, etc. The Betwa rises in Malwa and forms the boundary*

b. Mountains

The Mountains of Bundelkhand run parallel to each other and support a plateau or tableland one above the other and hence these are called ghats.(10) There are many isolated hills which rise from a common base. In shape they are pyramidal and irregular. In the words of Franklin, "they all seem to diverge from the apex of the plain expanding like sticks of a fan." (11) Though these give the impression of their standing isolated, they are parts of ranges which alternately appear and disappear in isolation or in a continuous form.(12)

The first of these ranges is called Bindhyachal. These are the northern range of the eastern Vindhya and constitute the eastern frontier.(13) In elevation the mountains are not more than 2000 ft. and are composed of granite and syenite with a covering of sandstone, and volcanic material.(14) The second range is called Panna Range, which also of volcanic origin, south of the plateau described earlier. It runs parallel to that of Bindhachal.(15) The third range is the Bardari Range, South west of Panna. The rock material comprises of sandstone and ferruginous gravel. The area is largely hilly and the escarpments steep and nearly inaccessible.(16) The rivers Ken and Patni rise from here. This area is the most elevated part of the province.

c. Rivers. The lignaceous earth and carbonized vegetable remains than is found in lands to the north of the Jumna.(17) Bundelkhand is watered by numerous rivers and rivulets, prominent among which are the Jumna, Chambal, Betwa, Dhasan, Ken, Sindh etc. The Sindh rises in Malwa and forms the boundary

between Gwalior and Bundelkhand.(17) Parallel to it flows the Pahug. The Betwa flows into the Jumna. Dhasan is the principal tributary of the Betwa. The Ken is the only navigable river.(18) Since this region had a network of waterways, preservation of water became necessary. Large lakes were constructed for the purpose of irrigation. e.g. Barwa Sagar and Kirat Sagar.

#### **d. Land and Soils.**

The geographical formation of the soil of Bundelkhand greatly influenced the soil of the alluvial plain lying between the hills and the R. Jumna. The Bundelkhand soil is black and ordinarily it is called cotton soil. It has been formed by the basaltic type of alluvium which is deposited by the various rivers in the Gangetic basin, which collected by draining the trap rocks of Bundelkhand and laid down in its basin at places where conditions are favourable.(19) The soil is dry and barren in hot weather, but the peculiarity of this soil is that it can retain moisture to a marked degree and yields in favourable seasons crops like cotton and cereals. But if it is not properly irrigated it can turn alkaline and saline as it is salty.(20)

In Bundelkhand the soil is classified into the following categories a) Mar, b) Kabar or Parua, c) Rakar.

Mar is a rich black soil found in the plains and lowlands. It contains more "agrillaceous earth and carbonized vegetable remains than is found in lands to the north of the Jumna." (21) It is peculiar for its power of retaining moisture. The next kind is known as the Parua. It is light in composition and of a

yellow brown colour and this soil is favourable for cotton and sugarcane cultivation. The third kind is called Rakar and is of two varieties. a) Moti and b) Patli. This is poorest of all soils. If rains are favourable it gives good kharif crops, but lack of moisture causes failure. The strength of the soil is soon exhausted and it has to remain fallow to regain its fertility. Besides the above mentioned primary divisions, there are two more secondary classes called Khera and Kachhar.(22) These soils derive their names from circumstance rather than being different in themselves. Khera is that land which is near the village and is irrigated from the wells. There are other kinds, one of them is called rakar. When treated it becomes fertile. When garden cultivation takes place it is termed Kachwara.(23) Kachhar is the land in the vicinity of streams or over flowing lakes during the rains. It is generally rich and rabi crops are grown.(24)

It is worth noting that classification of soil gained prominence in India during the 16th century, when lands were assessed for revenue. Land was classified according to the character and nature of the soil and external feature like texture, colour of soil, slope of land, availability of water but the most important consideration was yield of crops.

#### e. People

The inhabitants of Bundelkhand are a heterogeneous mixture of the various people who settled in the area at different points in history. The original and perhaps the earliest primitive tribes were the Bhils, Kols, Saheriyas, Gonds,

Bhangars, Khangars etc.(25) Some of these people are still existant today.

Among the Hindus, the Brahmans who occupied the highest echleon of caste society, belong to the jajhotia, kanyakuvja, gaur etc. sects.(26) The Rajpoots were another important caste and sub-divisions of this are the Bundelas, Panwars, Parihars, Chauhans, Kachhwaha, Sengar, Chandella, etc. Generally the Bundelas remained economically backward. However, with time they settled down into respectable cultivators.(26a)

The business community comprised of the Vaish class. The Kayasthas had assumed landlordship titles and had proprietary interest in Bundelkhand.(27) Amongst the others were the Lodhis who ranked as the highest agricultural class but below Brahmans, Rajpoots and Banias.(28) Since the Lodhis had become big land owners they were addressed as Thakurs.(29)

The Kurmis were the main cultivator caste and belonged to the low Hindu caste. They lost ground in the British period when the twenty years settlement was introduced in 1835. Leases were frequently cancelled for defaults of payments of revenue and their land transferred to outsiders.(30) This caused great resentment and culminated in mass uprisings in successive years.

#### Section B : HISTORY ✓

The history of Bundelkhand dates back to ancient times. The Puranas state that Pururava Alia, grandson of Manu, ruled the area between Prasthishthana (near Allahabad) to Malwa,

which included Jhansi.(31) In course of time his successor, Yadu, founder of the Yadava dynasty, inherited the territory watered by the Chambal, Betwa and Ken.(32) This branch of the Yadavas was eclipsed, and the Yadavas of Berar (Vidarbha) penetrated in the north and Kaisike founded the Chedi line and become ruler of the region known as Chedidesh.(33) It corresponded to the land lying south of the Yamuna between Chambal and Ken and corresponded to modern Bundelkhand.(34) The Chedis were probably absorbed into the Nanda empire in the 4th century B. C.(35) After the Nandas it formed part of the Mauryan Empire as a province.(36) The Sungas succeeded the Mauryas who held sway over Bundelkhand and Malwa.(37) The Sungas were replaced by the Kanvas, who in time were overthrown by the Andhra Kings.(38) The Satvahanas of the Deccan replaced the Andhra Kings.(39) Towards the end of the 1st century A.D. the district formed part of the extensive Kushan empire, under Kanishka and continued till 145-176 A.D. (40) This district finds mention in Ptolemy's geography as 'Prasaike' the country lying to south of the Yamuna.(41) During the 3rd and 4th century A. D. the Nagas held sway over Bundelkhand. Numismatic evidence corroborates the fact that the area between the Jumuna and the upper course of the Narbada and from the Chambal to the Ken in the east was ruled by them.(42) About the middle of the 4th century A.D., as a consequence of <sup>the</sup> Samudra Gupta's conquests, Bundelkhand passed into the Gupta empire. It was part of a bhukti (province) which covered the greater part of modern Bundelkhand.(43) The disintegration of Gupta period began during 477 -500 A. D. and taking advantage, the Huns ravaged the

territory.(44) It was at this time that Hieun Tsang visited these parts around 641 -642 A.D. and he mentions it by the name of "Chi-chi-to".(45) We find that during eight centruy the Pratihara Rajputs, the Chandellas in the 9th centry A.D. and Rashtrakutas in the 1st quarter of the 10th century A.D., held sway over the region.(46) Around 1169 - 1197 A.D. Prithvi Raj Chauhan became the ruler but unfortunately he could not retain control over this region.

Early Muslim invaders ravaged the areas with their frequent onslaughts. The central authority at Delhi ruled the region directly or with their representatives, resulting in the fragmentation of the region in the hands of titular Muslim representatives.

The Bundelas entered the scene after the downfall of the Chandelas. The Bundelas multiplied fast and established prinicipalities all over the land - Orchha, Chanderi, Erich etc.(46) It was Champat Rai Bundela of Mahoba and his son Chattrasal who tried to revive Bundela power to its pristine glory. Champat Rai threw off the Mugal allegiance and established his independent supremacy over his lost dominions.(47) But yet certain dominions of the Bundela possessions remianed in the hands of the muslim Government and this factor roused the patriotic feelings of the Bundelkhand chieftains as they loved their freedom and instigated them to rebel. The Agent of the Governor General writes in 1872 :

"I could not fail to observe in passing through

Orchha that this country of rocks, passes (dang) and forts is populated by thousands who but for British prestige would make the old hills ring again with their war-cries ". (47a)

The state of affairs at this time in Bundelkhand was that the land west of the Dhasan river was occupied by the Orchha Bundelas who were firmly fixed in their possessions, but the country east of the river was disunited and divided amongst various powers. (48)

After the death of Champat Rai, his son, Chatrasal sought <sup>to enhance the</sup> glory of the Bundelas and throw off the Mugal yoke. The prolonged Deccan wars of Aurangzeb and the struggle for power after his death enable Chatrasal to establish an independent kingdom for himself eastern Bundelkhand. (49) The endeavours of Chatrasal to expand the Bundelkhand dominion were resented by the Mugal Subedar of Alahabad who wanted Bundelkhand to be included in the Subah of Allahabad. (50) Early in 1727, Bangash, the Mugal Subedar began his campaign against Chatrasal. The Bundelas got scattered as the Mughals laid seige to Jaitpur fort where Chatrasal had taken refuge. In sheer desperation, Chatrasal appealed for Maratta help and sent a message to Baji Rao who was at Devgad. The message read :

\*

" जो गाते ग्राह गजेन्द्र की,  
को गाते जानेहुआज,  
बाजी जात नुदेज की,  
राहो बाजी हाज " ५१

Unfortunately, neither the Peshwa nor Chimanji Appa could come to Chatrasal's help and it was only in 1729, that Baji Rao

was able to come to the assistance of Bundela chiefs.(52) In appreciation of help rendered by the Peshwa, Chatrasal bequeathed Kalpi, Sagar, Jhansi, Sironj and Hardinagar which yielded a revenue of thirty three lakhs.(53) By the legacy of Chatrasal the Peshwa had become possessor of a large portion of Bundelkhand, thus opening a new chapter in the history of Bundelkhand. The Peshwa 's penetration into Bundelkhand extended further the frontiers of the Maratta kingdom and served as a base for the concentration of Maratta forces and then advance into the imperial domains. It also strengthened their position to operate against the Jats and Bundelas. After the death of Chatrasal, the position of the Marattas became stronger. However, the policy of Chatrasal to bequeath the aforesaid territories had an adverse effect on the morale of the Bundelas who were now heaped upon with Maratta domination and subsequent subjugation of Bundelkhand independence.(54) The Bundelas received a blow and this resulted in a long series of domestic trouble and internecine warfare which resulted in the parcelling out into a multitude of divisions which eventually gave rise to numerous petty states..

The Peshwa, meanwhile, assigned a portion of his share of Bundelkhand which consisted of Banda and Kalpi to Shamsher Bahadur, his son by a muslim concubine.(55) But the Mugal suzerainty over Bundelkhand was not easily relinquished and the Subedar of Allahabad considered himself to be the legitimate master of Bundelkhand. To this end, did Himmat Bahadur a Gosain in the services of the Subedar of Allahabad began to ply with

Bundelkhand affairs, seeking an opportunity to annex it.(56)

The Maratta governors looking after the Peshwa's possessions in Bundelkhand were apprehensive of the growth of Muslim domination and in fact Naru Shankar, was afraid of Shuja - ud - daula's power, who was the viceroy of Allahabad.(57) The Marattas withdrew and Imperial rule was re-established in Jhansi. Malhar Rao Holkar recaptured Jhansi a few years later. In 1794, Shoo Rao Bhaos succeeded to the governorship of Bundelkhand which had become a play ground for Mugal, Bundela and Maratta powers. The region was in the throes of civil a war.(58)

Ali Bahadur, the successor of Shamsher Bahadur was desirous of holding an independent authority, which again created jealousies in Pune as the ruling Peshwa did not approve of the revenues of valuable possessions passing out of Maratta control, even though Ali Bahadur had belonged to the Peshwa lineage. Consequently an arrangement was worked out between Ali Bahadur and the Peshwa, wherein, the sovereign and paramount rights of the Peshwa over the conquests of Ali Bahadur in Bundelkhand was acknowledged. Confidential trustees of the Peshwa were sent for superintending and controlling the collections and disbursement of the public revenue.(59) But the Marattas were never able to effect complete conquest of this region. Their plans to invade the British dominions by way of Bundelkhand did not meet with success. Himmat Bahadur, the crafty Gosain, in the service of Shuja-ud-daula made overtures to the British Government to assist in transferring the country to them.(60) The proposal of Himmat Bahadur was readily accepted and this is the origin of the

first occupation of Bundelkhand by British troops in 1803.(61) During the negotiations between Himmat Bahadur and the British, Shamsher Bahadur arrived but his efforts to establish his authority were unsuccessful. Captain Baillie, the political agent in the province made an offer to Shamsher Bahadur of a pension of four lakhs per annum and residence at Banda.(62) He surrendered to the British on 18th October 1804 and submitted all the forts held by his adherents. Captain Baillie was appointed agent to the Commander-in-Chief.(63)

Meanwhile, the Peshwa had been driven to Bassein by the rebellion of Jaswant Rao Holkar and other Maratta chieftains, were he concluded the Treaty with the British Government, which is known as the Treaty of Bassein, 1802, 25th October.(64) Shortly, after this transaction, the Peshwa proposed that the district the Savannore and other lands which had been assigned by him to the British instead of subsidy, should be restored to him in lieu of other matters, stipulated in the supplemented articles of Treaty of Bassien and a portion of the territory in Bundelkhand, should be ceded to the East India Company. Thus the British acquired a large portion of Bundelkhand province.(65)

On January 6th, 1804 the British entered into an alliance with Sheo Rao Bhaos by which the latter under took not protect or give refuge to any enemy of the British and to assist them in their expeditions against neighbouring states.(66) By the Treaty of June 13th, 1817, the sovereign rights of the Peshwa were transferred to the British in the province of Bundelkhand

including Jhansi and land held by Nana Govind Rao. This terminated the authority of the Peshwa in Bundelkhand and the only advantage which the British Government took of this cession in their favour was to require from Nana Govind Rao, the cession of a small portion of his territory with a view to complete the frontier line. In return ~~he~~ was constituted hereditary ruler of the remainder of his territory and released from payment of tribute.(67) With this, four of the Bundelkhand states, Jhansi, Jalaun, Jaitpur lapsed into British hands and Bundelkhand passed into the jurisdiction of the British.(68)

#### **Creation of Bundelkhand Agency:**

The political change was created in 1852. After the Treaty of Bassein, a political officer was attached to the forces operating in Bundelkhand for the purpose of introducing order into the civil administration. In 1811, when the country was settled and agent to the Governor General for Bundelkhand was appointed with headquarters at Banda. In 1818, the headquarters moved from Banda to Kalpi. In 1824, it moved to Hamirpur and it was moved back to Banda in 1832. In 1835 the control passed to the newly appointed Lt. Governor of north west provinces, whose headquarters were at Agra. In 1849, the superior control was handed over to the commissioner for Saugor and Nerbudda territories and Political Assistant was appointed for Jhansi holding immediate charge under the commissioner. The Assistant was soon after moved to Nowgong the superior control being transferred to the Resident at Gwalior.

In 1854, the Central India Agency was created, the

control thereby passed to the Agent to the Governor General for central India. From 1862 - 1871, the Baghelkhand charge was held conjointly with that of Bundelkhand, the political Assistant being replaced by a political agency in 1865. As a measure of economy, the agencies of Bundelkhand and Baghelkhand were amalgamated on 1st December, 1931. The headquarters of the combined agency were at Nowgong. The officer incharge of the combined agency was designated as the political agent in Bundelkhand. (69)

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### Chapter 3

#### ANNEXATIONS AND CONSOLIDATION OF BRITISH POWER IN BUNDELKHAND, EARLY REVENUE SETTLEMENTS

The British embarked on a cautious but very determined policy towards Bundelkhand. Their imperialistic designs took root from the land, and the revenue called jama or Khiraj, which accrued from it, provided the basis of their grand designs of empire building. Where they thought it expedient & advantageous they annexed the territory speedily wherre the gain was not immediately profitable they left it to the local chiefs, till such time that deemed suitable. There was always an undercurrent of authority in all transactions conducted, that should the need arise, strings could be pulled to their advantage as will be subsequently seen. Their policies were thus framed and motivated to achieve this end.

#### Early Annexations, Consolidation and Formation of the District.

The British gained a foothold in Bundelkhand by the Treaty of Bassein concluded on 16th Dec., 1803. By this treaty the Peshwa had acquiesced to cede territory in Bundelkhand which yielded revenue of Rs. 36,16,000 annually to the British.(1) Out of this the Government retained under its own administration land yielding about Rs. 14,00,000.(2) The Peshwa also relinquished his rights and pretension in the remaining portion of the province of

the area which he conquered in 1803.(3) By a subsequent Treaty of 1804, some chiefs also surrendered their independence. Their states were absorbed in the British jurisdiction.(4)

The initial fundamental principle in the arrangements made by the British Government in Bundelkhand between 1805 and 1806, was to confirm those chiefs who held ancient territorial rights at the time of Ali Bahadur.(5) No tribute was extracted from them. Another category of chiefs left independent were those who held ancient rights of territory since the time of Ali Bahadur. But they soon experienced that leaving these chiefs independent was not suitable, hence the territories were also absorbed into the British administered area. The native chiefs became vassals and they forfeited any further plans of aggrandisement.(6) The British let some chiefs continue to retain their position because their territories acted as a buffer between the Holkar and the ruling power, as the former was hostile towards both the English and Marattas.(7) Pacts were made with leaders of plundering bands who lived on the loot for subsistence. The Government pacified them by settling them on land to earn their livelihood.(8) Treaties of friendship and alliance were also made with those chieftains in the most western portion of Bundelkhand. Further, part of the territory which came under British jurisdiction was also relinquished in the form of grants to several Bundela chiefs.(9)

Rath, Jalalpur, Kharka and other districts soon came under British occupation. Banda and Hamirpur were acquired in 1804. (10) The district of Banwari formed the N. W. frontier of

Bundelkhand province. Kori, Parsalla districts east of Banda and a few villages of Raipur on the banks of R. Jumna to the south of Kalpi completed the British possession in Bundelkhand upto 1805.(11) Amils were subsequently appointed to settle a collect land revenue in Mahoba, Kalpi and also other district with the exception of Augasi and portion of the Banda district. In March 1807, the entire territory came in possession of the British and the land west of the Jumna were formed into one district known for a long time as Zilla Bundelkhand.

Towards the close of 1804, a commission was appointed to manage the affairs of the acquired territory in Bundelkhand. John Baillie was appointed agent to the Governor General, answerable to the superintendent of the Board of Revenue at Calcutta.(12) Baillie was an officer of commendable reputation and ability and J. D. Erskine was appointed collector.(13)

The British felt that the mere extension of the military and civil administration over the ceded territory would not produce the desired results unless they held the reins of both civil and revenue administration. Consequently, once the general foundation of the British political relation with the Bundela chiefs had been established, Baillie sought to use his good offices and propitiate an expedient course of action and endeavoured to bring uniformity in the general system and thereby reduce the charge of the District Political Agent in Bundelkhand.(14)

In 1811, when the country was settled, an agent to the Governor General for Bundelkhand was appointed with

Headquaters at Banda. In 1818, it moved to Kalpi and thence to Hamirpur in 1824. In 1832 back to Banda and in 1835, the control passed to the newly appointed Lt. Governor of north west provinces with Headquarters at Agra.(15)

Jhansi district was formed in 1839, when Raja Raghunath Rao died.(16) The British on the pretext of misrule prevailing in the state took over the direct administration till 1842 when the state was given to Gangadhar Rao who ruled till 1853, when he died issueless and state once more lapsed into British hands.(17) Military officials carried out ad hoc settlements with the people. In 1847, the control was handed to the commissioner for Sagar and Narvada territories. A political Assistant was stationed at Jhansi holding intermediate charge under his order. He was moved to Nowgong with Headquarters at Gwalior. Further, to gain a firmer hold of the territory annexed, it was advised to merge the Bundelkhand Agency into the Central India Agency including Jhansi with the political Assistant to reside at Rewa for administrative convenience.(18)

#### **Early Settlements and Condition of the District:**

There is not much information regarding the settlement for the period when Bundelkhand was under the Bundela and Maratta Governments. From information available, villages were largely given in reward or on condition that the grantees furnished troops. In villages which did not come under the purview of jagir or farmland, the principle of collection for the Government was to take the gross outturn, granting some allowance in cash or

land to the "mehtseys" or headmen.(19) This was given in recognition of their status, as representative of the brotherhood, or for their services which they rendered in the management of the villages. They collected the rents and paid the cost of management either in cash or its equivalent in land. This was the universal custom which under the Maratta rule.(20) The lessee fixed the highest revenue he could extract and selected the headmen who would make the highest offer. If the government retained the management in its own hands, the whole collection minus expenses were remitted to the Government, or held in Kabz (custody) by the military leaders, in lieu of the pay for the troops under his command.(21) Under the Marattas, there was another system known as "Dekha - par - Kee" whereby the demand was fixed, after an appraisement either at the close of each season or at the end of the year. The headman was responsible for payment of the demand, who in turn obtained it from the cultivators.(22)

The British found that the jama of the territory granted away to the Bundela chiefs added to the jama of the territory retained by the British Government did not exceed the value of the lands which the Peshwa had ceded to the British and consequently, they staked their claim from the Peshwa's share of the province.(23) The British resident at Poona directed the Board of Revenue to prepare a statement of the Parganas of Bundelkhand actually in British possession to collect the jama of them.(24) But work was hindered due to paucity of records. Baillie was asked to furnish the statement of jama of the native

states under Bundela chiefs and list of lands granted to various Bundela chiefs.(25) The first settlement was to be for one year, to be followed by three triennial settlements before a permanent settlement.

As portions of the district came under British rule the system of making summary settlement was introduced and they were naturally made with the mehteys of each villaage. The became responsible for collection and payment of Government demand. The collection of revenue between 1803 - 1805, was done on a summary basis. Very little <sup>is</sup> mentioned in the official records. The demand for 1803 - 1804 was approximately 57 lakhs and for 1804 - 05 slightly less.(26) Early in 1805 steps were taken to introduce the second triennial settlement of the ceded provinces. As the produce of the land had not sufficiently increased, the settlement imposed was not a very harsh one.(27) But it was neither an amiable one. Captain Baillie who confronted a complex situation where the problems were of a political and economic nature, did best to compromise by uniting his own authority with that of the former Government realizing the just balances of revenue. He also endeavoured to ascertain the correct assets and pending balances in all the resumed parganas. He was able to check the conduct of the previous Government officials who sought to enrich themselves in the last opportunity.

It is essential to throw some light on the conditions which prevailed in the district. They were appaling in view of the settlements which were being imposed. The total failure of crops, the surplus rents, which had accrued from

preceeding years had caused extensive ruin of villages and led to the impoverishment of the people.(28) With heavy Government demands and no cultivation, the people faced great hardships and there was no alleviation in sight from it. Many farmers did not have any money to till their land.(29)

Though representations were made to the Government for the abatement of Government demand in context of the prevailing circumstances. The Government continued to be adamant on its decision and claimed justification on grounds that standing crops could yield revenue.(30) Officials who were appointed had no idea of the conditions prevailing in the district and they endeavoured to increase the demands of the Government before the zamindars.(31) The zamindars too had failed to take responsibility of collection from villages where farmers had already made arrangements with other zamindars not under purview of the Government.(32) The situation warranted rectification, but none was forthcoming. In these circumstances, the Board of Commissioners for the affairs of Bundelkhand was directed to correspond with the Board of Revenue at Calcutta. Orders were issued for a triennial settlement on the sample principles as that of the ceded provinces; but these orders were soon rescinded. Quinquinal settlements with land holders were also to be made.(33)

The first settlement was a summary one made for one year (1213 fasli) by Erskine in 1806 A.D. the amount was Rs. 1,72,517 in Koonch and Rs. 76,285 in Kalpi on the principles laid down for the whole of the ceded provinces. The general

result of the assessment for 1213 fasli (1805 - 06) was that out of a total revenue of about 13 and half lakhs, one lakh was remitted on account of losses, caused by the incursion of the bandits from the western provinces.(34) In addition the "Gurrebunds" or refractory farmers who held forts in that pargana refused to make payments of revenue and instead used it themselves.(35) Though they were subdued, their revolting attitude could not be suppressed. This is controversial as, though the British termed them rebels, they were in fact <sup>the</sup> rightful owner of land and who collected the revenue but now were being deposed of their rights and denied their source of income and branded as rebels and causing disturbance to the British administration. With no alternative they indulged in dacoity and other means to extract their source of livelihood.

During the rule of the local Rajas, amils were entrusted with the task of revenue collection but they took advantage of the situation and tried to enrich themselves by undue exaction. To curtail the power of the amils, tehsildars were appointed to look into and supervise for the remaining period of the current fasli year and also surveyors were appointed to several of the resumed paraganas to collect data on which to base the succeeding assessments. The following statement shows the revenue statistics of this portion of Bundelkhand known as resumed mahals for the years between 1806-07.(36)

Name of Pargana	Year / Net Realisation	Year/Net R.
	1804 A.D. (1213 fasli)	1806A.D. (1214 fasli)

Pailani	Rs. 2,23,618	Rs. 2,20,603
Maudha	Rs. 1,67,180	Rs. 1,77,744
Sumerpur & Hamirpur	Rs. 1,59,384	Rs. 1,70,411
Sihonda	Rs. 62,975	Rs. 6,71,643
Chandela	Rs. 15,000	Rs. 1,500
Koonch	Rs. 30,836	Rs. - - -

#### **Erskine's Triennial Settlement - 1806 A.D.**

J. D. Erskine was entrusted with the task of implementing the third triennial settlement in 1806. It commenced from 1214 to 1216 fasli (1806-07 A.D.) to (1808-09 A.D.) The fiscal officers were to supply all the information regarding the assets under the native government and also a statement of annual revenue of each paragna for the preceeding ten years. (37)

The Patwari or the village accountant and tahsildars supplied the relevant information but it was sceptically treated in the absence of authentic documentation. The collector was obliged to accept whatever revenue was offered as there had not been a systematic survey and assessment had not been made on any standard value. Added to this were the various assignments of land and also of collection which made the task stupendous for the new masters. (38)

Land was a hereditary asset, acquired by right of succession in the form of a co-operative brotherhood. Each family shared in the revenue to be paid to the headman called the 'beriwar'. He was the over all incharge of the 'beris' that is

the sharers or the individual families who used to pay revenue. The beriwar collected the revenue from the subordinates and conducted all the business of the beri. Settlements were made with them and it was the responsibility of these sharers to meet the revenue demands. As the government assessed the entire village jointly the sharers were to allocate the ratio or proportion of payment amongst themselves. This allotment was made on the basis of the quanity of land which the sharers may have possessed, or in a state of cultivation. (39) The quality of land was not taken into computation of the assessment, for as each sharer was assigned land, which was considered uniform in soil productivity and quality. In pre-British era, the 'Bhaichara' (land tenure) system was in vogue. (Nature will be discussed in a later chapter) The cultivation of lands of each sharer was ascertained by actual measurement. This was done to a certain proportion called the bigha 'Bhaichara'. The motive was to elude the actual details from the government. The term of assessment upon each sharer remained vague. Settlement was made with the 'Mukhias' and with those who had paid the revenue since 1210 fasli. This settlement was concluded in 1807 A.D. After deducting the revenue of lands handed over to native chiefs the net revenue for four years was as follows.

(1213 to 1216 fasli) (40)

1213 fasli	Rs. 11,57,890
1214 fasli	Rs. 11,72,071
1215 fasli	RS. 12,02,357
1216 fasli	Rs. 12,22,264

This gave an aggregate increase of Rs. 1,23,623 on the revenue of

1212 fasli. Simultaneously, large remissions had to be made on account of the destruction of crops due to natural calamities.

Erskine's aim was to introduce some element of uniformity but the prevailing economic conditions impeded in obtaining maximum results. Further, as mentioned earlier the new masters were not sympathetic to the cause of the revenue payers, nor were they inclined to extend assistance to enable in the improvement of agriculture so as to receive the return they expected. The territory in the preceeding years of British occupation had undergone the ravages of ~~was~~ and devastation and therefore in the light of the existing circumstances the settlements were arbitrary. No thought or consideration was given to the consequences which would arise.(41) Erskine has remarked in his report that the proportion of land belonging to certain farmers was very large in several paraganas.

The third settlement of land revenue under the British administration was made for three years from 1217 to 1219 fasli. (1809-1810 A.D.) to (1811-1812 A.D.) by Wauchope who succeeded Erskine as collector in December 1808. His settlements were very hard and severe and consequently the farmers paid under duress. Revenue intake increased by nearly 40%. Though the eastern paraganas paid under constraint, the British felt that the settlement was fair and reported this to the Board of Commissioners. The regulation of 1809 was enacted, which delcared that the jama assessed in the previous area of the existing settlement, that is to say the 3rd settlement which was the last for four years would be fixed in perpetuity pending the approval

of the Court of Directors. (42) Though the British government made endeavours to bring area cultivation under exigency, land holders sold their land and fled. Consequently, land changed hands several times, especially in places like Bhaissunda, Chibbun etc.

The fifth settlement was made by Waring, and it considerably enhanced the revenue, so that in the eastern paraganas there was a gross increase of 46% and in the western (including Hamirpur) it was 21% (43)

The constant shifts in the boundaries of the Bundelkhand territories and the destruction of the records during 1857 disturbances made it difficult to follow the details of fiscal history of Bundelkhand in the initial years of British occupation. The last summary settlement was made by Major Erskine.

It would be relevant to mention that there was an over assessment in Bundelkhand. Since there was no particular group of engagers with whom settlements could specifically be made, settlements were made haphazardly with zamindars, taluqdars, revenue farmers and headmen of villages. The immediate need of collecting revenue was the main reason for accepting engagements from a variety of individuals. Also, this prevented the collectors from determining who were the right persons with whom the settlements were to be made. In Bundelkhand as the predominant tenure was 'Bhaichara' a form joint tenure, the settlement was made with the representative of the community as stated earlier.

### Division of Bundelkhand into two Districts

In 1817, the whole of the rights of the Peshwa over the Jhansi principality were transferred by the Treaty to the British government which decided to incorporate the state of Jhansi with the districts in Bundelkhand under the charge of the Erskine. (44)

In November, 1818, it was resolved to divide the district of Bundelkhand into two portions. Kalpi was selected as headquarters and in March 1819, the districts of northern Bundelkhand including Hamirpur and Kalpi were formed with Headquarters at Kalpi. The district of southern Bundelkhand with Headquarters at Banda was formed. In 1817 perganas Khandeh was ceded by the chief of Jaloun and added to the Banda districts. (45) Between 1807-1822, Bundelkhand was incorporated under the western Board of Commissioners and merged into the Board for western provinces at the close of 1822. (46) The supervision of Bundelkhand was transferred to the Central Board of Commissioners. (47)

### Relationship of British with the States; Interchange of territory between the States and with the British.

The British relationship with the states and chieftains of Bundelkhand were of a mixed order.

a. Sanad States: There were twenty six sanad states in Bundelkhand, namely Panna, Ajaigarh, Bijawar, Lugasi, Chattarpur etc. (48) Sanads granted were of three kinds.

I. Those who held hereditary rights since Ali Bahadur's time and were included in the assignment of 36 lakhs

of revenue ceded by the Peshwa. They were confirmed of their chieftainship and territorial rights and bound by 'Ikrarnama'. The chieftains advocated loyalty and total submission to the British Government. In addition they were to relinquished territory that had been acquired after Ali Bahadur's death. (49)

II. Those who declared themselves during the troubled period before and after the Maratta invasion as independent. (50)

III. Those whom it was necessary to pacify. In such cases the government did not want to impose itself on them and hence brought them under the purview of the Regulation XXII of 1812, by which they were exempted from the operation of the general Regulation and from the jurisdiction of the civil and criminal courts. A statement of lands not inserted in the Sanad, but for which chiefs paid a fixed revenue though the Governor General's agent were also drawn, to determine whether or not those particular lands were to be exempted from the British courts. The exemption was to provide for two points viz a) to enter the Bundela chiefs who should concern themselves in the Malguzari tenures or amenable to the jurisdiction of British Courts in all matters concerning such tenures or transactions and to exclude from the operation of British laws of

Regulations from these categories and fixed a revenue of 5 lakhs.(51)

b. Treaty States;

The relations between the British Government and the Treaty States of Rewa, Orchha, Datia and Sampthar were based on friendship and protection against the Marattas. (52) When the rights of the Peshwa over the Jhansi principality were transferred to the British Government the cases of Orchha and Datia were slightly different, because they were neither granted by the British Government nor the Peshwa. They were independent states before the Marattas entered Bundelkhand and on this ground, the government recognised the adoption of sons by Rajas of these states. (53)

Sampthar State: Sampthar state received villages from paragana Koonch in Jalaun district. Two villages from paragana Moti in Jhansi district was also given to Sampthar state.(52)

Jhansi State: A treaty of friendship and alliance was concluded between the British Government and the Pesdhwa and Sheo Rao Bao, the Subedar of Jhansi, so that he would not be a source of trouble for either friends of the British and harbour the enemies of the British. For this, he was allowed to retain his position.(55) In 1843, a new political engagement with Raja Gangadhar Rao was concluded by which the state was returned to him except the lands (estimated annual revenue of Rs. 2,27,458) which were to be assigned to the British government for the payment of half the cost of the Bundelkhand legion, (56)

Which was disbanded in 1848. Gangadhar Rao ceded most of the land in the tahsils of Moth and Garautha in 1843, and it was put under the control of the superintendent of Jalaun. The land revenue of the autumn crops went to the Governor General's treasury and the spring was left to the Raja. He assented to all the above conditions.(57) In 1853 Gangadhar Rao died without any heir and his estates lapsed to British. The area comprised of 696 villages scattered over the paraganas of Pachor, Karahra, Mau, Bijaigarh and Pandwaha.(58) Seizing this opportunity, Gwalior which was waiting for a propitious moment put forth the following suggestion to the British Government.(59) The Gwalior durbar had wanted to exchange some villages of Jhansi state, situated on the right bank of river Scinde, bordering Narwar and Ranode as far as village Karwi.(60) This was to enable a direct route to Esagurh, which otherwise was a very circuitous one. The point they tried to prove was that it would be advantageous for the British to approach territory in the Deccan and quell any disturbance expeditiously. However, the British administration did not immediately acquiesce to this proposal and scrutinized it to see whether Gwalior was not in fact trying to consolidate its position and intended to get rid of rebellious states.(61) It was ironical that Jhansi which played a vibrant role in the upsurge of 1857, was subjected to the maximum penalty for its participation against the British. This was the watershed of British policies in Bundelkhand. Ever since this region was subdued and suppressed with utmost cruelty, rigorous punishments were inflicted on the people in the form of heavy settlements and no let up in case of defaultment and no compassion for genuine sufferers. Further, it

was suggested to re-adjust the boundary between the Gwalior state and Jhansi, (62) and that to transfer the Jhansi fort to the Maharaja Gwalior for the services rendered to the British during 1857 uprising. (63)

Further exchange of territory took place, when in 1856, Jhansi city was acquired from Scindia in exchange for Gwalior fort in Morar. (64) In 1871, Jhansi villages were transferred to Scindia. These were the productive areas of the Jhansi state and since their transfer, Jhansi was devoid of culturable land to a great extent. The question was soon going to arise, as to where would the revenue come from to pay the government.

Gwalior: In 1844, the Maharaja Scindhia, assigned to the British Government a large extent of territory which included the paraganas and taluqas of Bhandere, Garhman, Chanderi and eighty villages. (65) The estimated revenue from Bhandere was Rs. 1,80,000. (66) Indurki yielded about Rs. 37,000, Gurhew Rs. 2,400 and Moti were transferred in 1860. (67) These tracts were given to the military subordinate to the Agent to the Governor General in Bundelkhand who made summary settlements with the land holders. This was in adjustment of accounts connected with the expenses of the Gwalior contingent. (68) Scindia received in return all territory he had ceded in 1844 - the whole of the paraganas Pachor, Karahra and sixty one villages in Jhansi. All villages west of river Pahuj were given to Scindhia and those east of the river 180 villages that had been assigned for the support of the Gwalior contingent were ceded to the British in full sovereignty. (69)

Jalaun:

The state of Jalaun belonged to a Maratta family who emigrated from the Deccan in 1806. The British made a treaty with the chief of Jalaun, Nana Govind Rao, treating him as an independent ruler, without referring to the Peshwa, and guaranteed to him his crown and state,(70) by virtue of his ancestral hereditary. They acquired from him any territory without intimating or seeking permission from the Peshwa. The state was incorporated into the British administration zone after the death of Govind Rao in 1838.(71) The taluqa of Chirgban comprising of 28 village which formed the Hashtbhaiya Jagir, was given to then district of Jalaun. (72)

Kalpi:

All the villages and Mahals ceded by the British to Nana Govind Rao as an equivlent for the portion of the district and certain villages of Raipur in exchange for lands in paragans kotra and Mohammadpur. Twenty eight villages were restored to Nana Govind Rao.

Banda and Hamirpur :

The districts of Banda and Hamirpur were regulation districts and part of the Allahabad division. This arrangement was faulty. The district of Alipura lay between paraganas Mahoba and Jaitpur, both of which were administered from Orai.(74) The villages of Jaitpur were administered with those of paragona Punwarri in the Hamirpur district. Orai lay between Koonch and the station of Hamirpur and the long strip of land on the bank of

the Jumna was much nearer to Orai than to Hamirpur. Koonch suffered because it was cut off from the rest of the district. Thus the interest of this part of the territory was neglected, prosperity was on the decline. Therefore it was suggested to transfer Mahoba and Jaitpur to Hamirpur and Koonch and Kalpi to Orai. This would make them nearly equal and compact.

District	Area in sq. miles.
Banda	2878
Hamirpur	2379
Orai	2773

Hamirpur was restored to the Allahabad division. The non regulation paraganas of Mahoba and Jaitpur were at the same time brought under the operation of the general laws by the Act XII of 1863. Jalaun, Jhansi and Lalitpur on the other hand were never brought under the Regulation system.(77) In 1852, the Sagar and Narvada territories were transferred to the NWP Government from 1853 to 1858, a certain amount of system was introduced with the administration.

In the readjustment of boundaries which followed the 1857 disturbances, the Raja of Banpur's estates were confiscated for rebellion and added to Chanderi.(78) In 1844, Chanderi territory (paragana Madhogarh, Indurki, Duboh came under British rule as a guarantee for payment of the Gwalior contingent.(79) The estates of the Raja of Shahgarh were incorporated in the newly formed district of Lalitpur in 1860.(80) Thirty six villages formed part of the Sagar district and had been under the

British since 1819 were given to Lalitpur.(81) In 1812, a sanad had been granted to Kesri Singh of Jaitpur and his was reinstated in his tenure.(82) In 1849, it lapsed to the British overnment and was included in the paragana of Hamirpur district in 1853.(83) Amrit Rao was granted a pension of seven lakh rupees as his estate was seized because he did not side with the British.

In the extreme west Garha Kota was exchanged with Shahgarh and the Chanderi Rajas remained independent at Banpur. Chitali were granted to Nasir-ud-daula. To Jugal Prasad surrounding villages were given.(84) Koonch was taken in 1809. In 1858, the Tahahwan Jagir was added to Banda while Kuchwahaga, Mahoba which upto 1837 formed portion of of Jalaun was then transferred to Hamirpur. (86) The latter was added to the Jhansi division and whole was formed with one commissionership in 1858.(87) Some villages in Panna were given to Bundelkhand.(88) This constant shift in the boundaries of the states and exchange of territory caused administrative and subsequently revenue problems arose as there was no consistency in the frontier of the states. This caused not only administrative, but revenue problems as the border areas could not be attached to a particular district and assessed properly. We have seen how post 1857 era witnessed the constant changes in the boundaries, as the British were fastidious as to whom to reward or penalise.

#### **Settlements of Waring, Valpy and Reade 1815 A.D. - 1826 A.D.**

The revenue administration of the district began with the arrival of Captain John Baillie in 1804, later by Erskine in

1805-06, followed by Wauchope in 1808 who assessed the paragana for Rs. 89,416.

The fourth regular settlement was made in 1815 by Scott Waring. It was during his tenure that the troubles in Bundelkhand commenced. The annual avarage jama of this settlement exceeded the average of the preceeding three years settlement by over Rs.800,000.(88) There is no proper information on his assessment which he depended on vague assertions on expanded cultivation. His method of forming the settlement was highly questionable, as he encouraged zamindars to open auction assessment in which numerous estates were leased on to the revenue farmers. Thus the jama to a large extent was determined by speculation. The superficial prosperity bloated and people became optimistic of the continued prosperity but it soon burst and was short lived. The high assessment of Waring, the fall in prices combined with peculiarities of tenure and uncertainty of weather all combined to exert a tremendous hardship among the people and a severe strain on agriculture ensued. This resulted in unrealizable revenue and a decline in jama.(89) Transfers of property were the order of the day.

Valpy did not permit any remissions in the settlements of his predecessors, rather imposed it with utmost severity. He was of the view that the zamindars were always anxious to retrieve their lost patrimonial landed property, showed that they were capable of paying as they very anxiously desired the ability to do so.(90) Though eventually he reduced the demand in Kalpi to Rs. 1,12,514 and further to Rs. 1,05,349 in 1826.(91)

Khandeh was assessed by Valpy. The revenue was fixed at Rs. 1,83,490. Collection difficulties enhanced, and estates defaulted in payment and were put up for auction but there were no buyers.(92) The settlement had been for a quinquennial one and in 1820, the land owners took advantage of the permission given under Regulation IX of 1818 and expressing their inability and intentions to pay on the old terms.(93)

A fifth regular settlement was started by Campbell and completed by the Reade. In view of the deteriorating situation the demands were reduced from 85% to 80%.(94) But the benefit did not extent to the entire paragana. Bad seasons followed and added to the difficulties in management and collection accumulated. There was a temporary prosperity between 1823-24 but the situation before its recovery, fell back. The period of settlement expired and an attempt was made resettle the district under Regulation VII of 1822.(95)

The gravity of the situation warranted the attention of the Bengal Government and of the Governor General who was touring the western provinces, as the region had been presenting a grave problem of revenue collection. During 1820-21, the region had a jama of Rs. 1,581,608(96) on 657 estates which were resigned estates. A pertinent question arose regarding the crisis in Bundelkhand whether it was a result of over assessment or whether behind the face of over assessment, there were deep rooted factors - economic and others, which made the pressure of assessment upon the people an intolerable one.(97) In 1829, the provinces of Regulation of 1821 were extended to Bundelkhand

which unsettled the minds of auction purchasers, because they felt the question of the legality of their title would be investigated on complaints made by the former zamindars. Added to this the British administrators felt that zamindars in general had a tendency to encourage the decline of cultivation towards the end of a settlement in order to obtain a reduction of the jama in a new settlement.(98) But to corroborate this statement there is no supporting evidence or convincing arguments. If a decline in cultivation was a way to obtain a reduction in the jama the question is why did innumerable zamindars resign their estates, being managed 'Khas' or handed over to the revenue farmers.(99) In fact it was the Board of revenue which did not wish to accept the factors of bad weather, peculiarity of tenure and other economic reasons as being the basis of the causes of the crises in Bundelkhand.(100) The fall in agricultural prices and an increase in the value of the currency made even a reasonable assessment intolerable. S. Waring's settlement of 1815 - 16 to 1819-20 had considerably increased the revenue whose pressure on land was aggravated by factors mentioned earlier.(100a) The result of Waring's assessment was to destroy the key to revenue collection - the village mahajan. Where the village community was in a prosperous state, the mahajan was established. Eventually it was he who turned to profit from the surplus produce and from that profit he aided the raiyats in cash and grain.(101) The mahajan commenced controlling the credit of the village economy and enabled the cultivators to pay revenue even in a bad season.(102) The mahajan was destroyed because the pressure of assessment prevented recovery of his advances. (103) The re-

organisation of the revenue administration took place in 1829, while the problems of revenue collection had been worsening since 1820-21. The extension of Regulation I of 1821, in Bundelkhand and its effect on revenue collection did not make any sense at all, as the Regulation was enacted to investigated fraudulent cases in land dealings, and in Bundelkhand there were very few of such cases.

To conclude briefly the five years settlements during the period under study did not meet with much success. The Regulation in question, however, remains a landmark in land revenue policy. The defects in the formulation of the 1822 policy and its impracticability led to the rethinking policy of 1833.

#### **Formation of Jhansi Division and its Abolition.**

In 1854, the superintendency of Jhansi was formed. (104) It consisted of nine lapsed paraganas - Jhansi, Pachor, Karahra, Mau, Pandwaha, Bijaigarh paragana - Moth including the taluqa of Chirgaon, Bhander and Garautha (Including the 61 villages of Gurserai, ubari estates making a total of 1220 villages). (105) Bijaigarh paragana was divided between Pandwaha and Garautha in 1861. Pachor and Karahra were transferred to Scindia. (106) Six paraganas consisting of Jhansi, Moth, Bhander, Garautha, Pandwaha and Mau were left out and were divided into five tahsils. Paragana Bhander was incorporated in Jhansi. (107) On their transfer to Jhansi in 1854, Captain Gordon, the superintendent of the district was entrusted with the charge of the settlement in the same year. (108)

In 1858 the three districts of Jhansi, Jalaun and Chanderi were detached from the Sagar and Narvada territories and were formed with Hamirpur. This was removed in 1863 with a division under a separate commissioner.(109) In 1866, Pandwaha tahsil was abolished and its component villages were distributed over Mau and Garautha. In Lalitpur, the paraganas were recognised as fiscal divisions. By the Treaty of 1861, the Chanderi part of the district was formed into a tahsil the Headquarters of which were at Lalitpur. A new tahsil at Mahroni was created. It consisted of paraganas, Banpur, Mahroni and Madaora.(111)

In 1888, two questions arose regarding ;

- a: The separation of the judicial and executive functions of the officers of the Jhansi commissionership.
- b: Re-organisation of the districts, subordinate to the commissionership and extension of his jurisdiction. The commission in the light of the existing situation made the following suggestion:- (112)

1. To abolish the commissionership and create the position of the judge .
2. To abolish the district of Lalitpur as a separate entity and to assimilate it in a sub-division of the district of Jhansi.
3. It was suggested to incorporate the two districts in the Allahabad division. By this Jhansi ceased to be a scheduled district and all the enactments in force in the Allahabad division were extended to Jhansi, Jalaun and Lalitpur from April 1st 1891. Revenue officers were released from their civil and judicial duties.(113)

Lalitpur was attached to the Jhansi district on Dec. 1st 1891. The district of Jhansi became one of the regulation districts of N.W. provinces and was placed under the general control of the superintendent of Jalaun and administration merged with it. By this the British tried to bring a general uniformity of arrangement in two tracts immediately adjoining to each other. Jhansi and Jalaun were under the authority of the commissionership in the Sagar and Naravada territories and Captain Skene was assigned the task of concluding the settlement both of Jalaun and Jhansi. (114)

Such was the political arrangement which ensued till the close of the 1800s.

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## Chapter 4

### REGULAR SETTLEMENTS FOR BUNDELKHAND DISTRICT: JHANSI, LALITPUR, BANDA KARWI, HAMIRPUR AND JALAUN.

The frequent and numerous changes and transfers of territory in Bundelkhand gave rise to revenue and administrative problems as lands which constituted part of a district at one time, were attached to another, for administrative convenience at a later date. Added to this, the disturbances of 1857 enhanced the already complex situation. All the work undertaken in the settlements of the paraganas were undone and had to be undertaken again in the post mutiny era.

When settlements were made certain issues were taken into consideration like: (1)

- a. actual cultivation to have reached 60% of the cultivated area.
- b. the government was to receive 80% of the existing assets.
- c. the district in which agriculture was backward, population scarce, rent not fully developed, such areas were to be exempted from permanent settlement.
- d. fully developed districts were to be permanently settled.
- e. no assessment was to be made on the strength of the unclaimed land under any circumstances, until the assessing officer had personally examined the soil and assessed it himself that it might easily and profitably be brought under tillage. The early summary settlements were conducted with haste, without any due consideration for the cultivation, quality of land and ability to pay.

Regular settlements were introduced in the paraganas of Bundelkhand just prior to 1857 and in the post mutiny era. We will take these individually and analyse the settlements introduced in them.

### **Jhansi: 1864 - First Regular Settlement.**

A brief resume of the revenue settlement till 1864.

The Jhansi settlement differs in many points from other settlement carried out in other N.W. Provinces, in that the main difference is that this was the first regular settlement of the district and consequently the work of assessment had to be carried out with no help from previous experience and difficult questions connected with proprietary rights were to be decided for the first time. For a better understanding the district of Jhansi is being divided into 3 portions. (2)

- i. those which lapsed with Jhansi state in 1853.
- ii. those which were transferred from Jalaun district in 1854.  
viz. Moth, Garautha, and Bhander.
- iii. the Lalitpur sub-division.

These districts were brought under direct administration of summary settlement for three quinquennial period of which no records survive.

In 1854, Major Gordon was entrusted with the charge of settlement in Jhansi. It is rather difficult to know how Gordon arrived at his assumptions as to average assets. (3) So far as could be discovered, he appeared to have employed produce rates, at which he arrived by calculating the average produce, cost of

cultivation and the profit in each class of soil. These rates he actually compared with actual revenue rates paid in adjoining districts in Bundelkhand. He formed circles of similar villages and from the average rates so obtained he calculated separate sets of rent rates in each village. He divided the sub-division of the acre into twentieths and under the name of (Biswahs) and then again divided by twenty which were called (Biswansees). But this is an incomplete account of his methods. (4) However, he instituted a reduction of 38% on the former revenue that is, he fixed the annual revenue at Rs. 55,725. This decrease followed from lowering the rate of assessment from 2/3rd to 1/4th assets, which remain unchanged. By June 1857, assessments were complete and he ordered a reduction of 28% on Erskine's demand. Though regular survey commenced in the lapsed paraganas in 1854, Captain Gordon was to settle them summarily. This was disliked by the local zamindars as they were in favour of a regular settlement. The British Government introduced a regular settlement from July 1st 1856 for a period of three years. The task was completed but the disturbances undid all the work. (5) Perganas of Bhander and Garautha were assessed for a period of twenty years but Moth was not settled. Unfortunately Captain Gordon was killed in the disturbances of 1857. He was succeeded by Daniell who pursued a different system, which was not a very satisfactory one.

Daniell ascertained the nominal rates paid in the villages of each class of soil. These rates were bigha rates and were generally known and accepted in each village. He determined

an average rent rate on each description of soil which as far as his enquiry and experience led him to conclude the next cut turn of the land and this rate was his basis for deducing the Jama. The system did not prove very satisfactory as there was no uniformity in the calculations and in some villages the revenue increased and in some it was lowered. (7)

In 1863, Major Davidson took over. He divided the Jhansi Pergana into two districts - 1) north around Jhansi where the land had good soil - Mar and Kabar and 2) in the south where the soil was poor containing rakar and where cultivation depended on wells and these were called 'Kuabandi' villages. These classes were further divided into two according to their population and other advantages. In villages where bigha rates prevailed he ascertained current rates and worked out from them average rate of the class of each soil. In kuabandi villages he fixed rates lesser than the bigha rates. His settlement was carried out on these principles with great care. Col. Davidson's assessments were considered to be generally fair and light in comparision to that of his predecessors. (8)

The British were of the view that as they had just recently occupied the territory, the settlements should not be fixed for a long time. Twenty years was sufficient as they had anticipated general improvement and increase of agricultural assests and hence kept prospects open for subsequent revision. To this effect the first regular settlement was introduced in Jhansi in 1864.

### Jenkinson's Regular Settlement - 1864.

The first regular settlement was introduced in Jhansi district from the commencement of 1272 fasli i.e. 1864 A.D. and would expire at the end of 1291 fasli that is 30th September, 1884. (9) Jenkinson after taking over as settlement officer had a colossal task ahead of him. Out of a total of 8,45,519 acres of the district of Jhansi, 1,79,117 acres or 22.22% were unfit for cultivation either due to being barren and covered with waste water the total assessment in 1867, stood at Rs. 5,20,246. Actual revenue in 1867 was Rs. 4,81,874. He wrote that the district had been fairly assessed, though in Mau and Pandwaha the assessments were very unequal. As there was no equality, a revision of settlement was called for. Since the records had been destroyed Jenkinson had no basis on which to form his calculations. He made enquiries from officers who had worked with Gordon and it appears that he made use of produce rates, calculating i.e. the average produce, cost of cultivation and profit on each class of soil as mentioned earlier. (10) He further compared the rates thus obtained with the actual revenue rates paid in adjoining districts and formed 'chuks' or circles of similar village and from the average rates so obtained struck separate sets of rent rates for each village. But this information was incomplete. Had there been more material we could have gained an insight into the actual rates paid by cultivators in different classes of soil which must have formed a main element in the calculations. (11)

Jenkinson tried to find out from Kanungoes and other officials, how the rent rate was worked out and calculated the

government demand on the three paraganas. The course adopted was that the rates of rent prevailing in the neighbouring districts of Bhander, Hamirpur and Jalaun and Sagar were first ascertained.(12) The return showed the total produce in kind and the out turn (nikase) in each village, were then called for. From these the average rent rates on each kind of soil was worked out like in the case of Mau and Pandwaha paraganas. As said earlier these paraganas were divided into circles and fixed rates for each circle according to its capabilities and estimated outturn and composed them with the average rent rates last mentioned. These were applied to each circle of village.(13)

The Maafee villages were assessed by Jenkinson and reductions were made in the assessment to accord some relief to the cultivators. In the paragana of Gurotha, Jenkinson found in 1864 that no steps had been taken for a fresh assessment. The villages had deteriorated to such an extent that it was necessary to give them an opportunity of restoring them to their former <sup>found</sup> conditions. He ~~formed~~ that the management was not satisfactory. Local Bundela Thakurs did not do much to alleviate the economic sufferings of the people. No tenants were induced to settle on the land. As this paragana suffered from economic depredation Jenkinson proposed to restore the villages to the proprietors on a reduced jama to be increased gradually and give them Tuccavée advances.

Inspite of these measures cultivation did not increase and mass migrations had commenced from this paragana. Considering that the disturbances of 1857 caused widespread

destruction of property and cultivation, no time was allotted to the cultivators to redeem themselves from the damages and start afresh.

(Bhandere) On the formation of the new district of Jhansi the Bhandere paragana was transferred from Jalaun to the Jhansi division. The actual demand for 1866-67 (1274 fasli) with deductions amounted to Rs. 60,869, with a reduction of Rs. 34,634.(15)

(Fundwaha) For Pundwaha, the actual demand in 1866-67 (1274 fasli) was Rs. 78,274. Jenkinson took into consideration the factors in Pundwaha and settled it at the lowest amongst all previous settlements.(16).

(Jhansi) The regular settlement was introduced in the paragana of Jhansi from the commencement of 1272 fasli and was intended to last till 30th Sept. 1884. a duration of twenty years. The actual demand was Rs. 46,845 in 1866-67.(17) It will not be improper to mention that Major Gordon's settlement in Jhansi paragana did not hold as in the other three paraganas, as the soil was poor and the farmers were impoverished as was the case in the other districts of Bundelkhand. Settlements prior to 1869-70, were intended to be light but this did not always achieve its purpose. Already the revenue was scanty as there was crop failure and the farmers were unable to pay. Further, new land deeds or 'Khewats' had to be drawn up as new lands had come under cultivation.(18) The standard of measurement was unknown in the villages. Rent was paid in a lump sum called "thanka". The

system under which rent was taken for the outlying areas was called "bheej gooneah". The principle of the system was that the rent was calculated on the estimated weight of grain required to sow the field. In each kind of grain there was a different rate. When the crops ripened a 'merk thoka' was held by which the weight of grain required to sow the field was estimated. The rent of the field was calculated on this estimate at certain known rates.(19) No account was taken of the quality of the crop and in addition the whole loss of the bad season fell upon the cultivator. He said that "in the cultivated areas, the value of which was estimated at average rates, the 'dosala' that is rakar land which after the 3rd year of cultivation had to be fallow for a certain number of years, varying from 2-5 years". In so doing he extricated the maximum permissible from the zamindars and also did not neglect the interest of the government.(20)

It is observed that during the years of 1869-70 cultivation had suffered maximum as crops had failed due to drought. The settlement was tried severely as cultivators fled due to their inability to pay. Outstanding balances amounted to Rs. 1,60,347. The situation was further aggravated as the people had started to emigrate, peasants were impoverished which let to cultivation diminishing. In paragana Jhansi 86,000 acres of land lay fallow during these years. The effects of famine were awful. 1868-69 were years of great misery and more so that land lay idle, but it was unavoidable. The assessment continued to be imposed and peasants were pressed upon to pay. With the result migration started and agriculture was in ruins.

The British Government at Calcutta was requested for a lighter settlement in view of the fact that there were no facilities for the peasants to overcome these difficulties. There was no favourable reply to this request. Though the factors for a lighter settlement weighed heavily but it was not to be. The whole district reeled under economic devastation, but nothing was done to alleviate the sufferings. Jenkinson was sympathetic to the people's cause but his efforts also failed in getting a positive response from the government.

#### Lalitpur : A brief resume of settlements till 1869.

Lalitpur lies to the south of Jhansi, separated by the R. Betwa and parallel to the Sagar district of the then ceded provinces. It was originally the Chanderi district when it was assigned in 1844 by Scindhia in part payment for the Gwalior contingent. By the Treaty of December 1860, Chanderi pargana was returned to Scindhia and rest of the territory ceded in complete sovereignty to the British Government. This territory included the estate of the Raja of Banpur and Shahgarh which constituted the post mutiny demarcation of Lalitpur district. The total area was 19,475 sq. miles. 2,46,344 acres, out of which 2,14,840 was cultivated, 4,71,235 culturable but not cultivated. (20)

The district was remote, poor and backward. In the absence of trade and its remoteness from the more prosperous and busy parts of the country and communications with the outer world was difficult. The soil was generally poor with stony, rocky and jungle landscape. The cultivated area excluding (maafee patches)

of land, which were probably to a great extent cultivated, was 2,87,288 acres of which 28,836 or 10% only was irrigated.

It appears that the local practice was to pay rent in cash at so much a bigah, according to the crop sown and not according to the soil. Ascertaining the system of rotation and the actual area of each class of soil under each crop and estimating the average produce and net profits of that crop, the assessing officers translated the crop rates of each village into soil rates. They then divided the villages according to their capacities and advantages into three or four classes and drew out the average rates for each kind of soil in each village of each paragana. These rates were broadly fixed in round numbers. e.g. i.) moti soil ranged from Rs. 2-8-0 to 12 annas, ii.) Doomit from Rs. 2 to 8 annas ; iii.) Patni from Re. 1 to 4 annas. (21).

#### **Early Summary Settlements:**

The first Summary Settlement of Lalitpur district was made in 1843-44 to 1847-48 by Captain Blake at an estimated value for Rs. 97,758-5-6. Under the summary settlement in this period, the revenue paying estates in the paragans obtained from Scindhia were held by passis whose tenure solely depended in the face of their ability to meet the government demand. The state was the sole acknowledged proprietor of the soil. (22)

The second settlement was from 1848-49 to 1852-53 by Captain Harris for Rs. 1,07,663-0-0. The third settlement was done by Captain Gordon from 1853-54 to 1859-60 which was for Rs.

96,968-1306.(23) By so doing he reduced his predecessor's demand. Though it was not a substantial reduction it gave some relief to the cultivators.

In the disturbances of 1857, the district like other portions of Bundelkhand suffered so miserably that a reduction in the demand was necessary as the disturbance, the famines and pestilence had devastated the provinces. Even though tuccavee advances were made they were utilised for procuring food. Farming was neglected as a small portion of the cultivated area was irrigated and in the absence of the productive power of the soil there was no outturn of agricultural produce.

Captain Tyler who took over in 1860-61, accorded considerable relief in consequence of the losses and made ~~still~~ large <sup>e</sup> reduction in the settlements.

#### **Col. Davidson's Regular Settlement :1869**

Col. Davidson was appointed in 1863 to assess and settle Lalitpur as he had thorough knowledge of the district and he possessed considerable revenue experience. The work of assessment in Lalitpur began in 1863 and concluded in 1868.

Lalitpur was not a district, the assessment of which could stringently be tested by average rate, or in which a settlement officer could assume that the same rents paid in one village could be equally paid in other villages for similar land. The twenty years settlement was instituted to fix a fair average. The task was difficult as the rent rates were to be determined and

simultaneously whether the government demand should have been reaised or lowered. Taking on from his predecessors he too shared in the belief of reduced assessments.

Rents throughout the district were taken in cash. The prevalence of the system of "thanka" or fixed lump sum, which was generally lower than what the crop rates would amount to. Added to this was the prevalence of the " pahi - kasht " that is cultivators holding land in a different village from that which he inhabits - a custom evidently arising from the scarcity of cultivators and which indicated the necessity of permanence in the habits of tenres at that time. As stated earlier , it was not feasible to have a uniform jama for the whole district.(23) Even though Lalitpur had an irrigated area of 16% as against 1% in Sagar district, Lalitpur remained backward. In the Jhansi district the jama rate was higher and the government demand was much higher as the irrigated area was higher and it supported a denser population. Hence in the Khalsa lands he kept the average demand at 12 annas per acre in the productive areas and eight annas in the poorer areas. Since the reduction in jumas was made in 1861-62, the revenue was collected without much difficulty and no coercive measures were necessary.(24)

The rent was fixed on the crops and not on the soil alone. Villages were classified according to the number of cultivators, means of irrigation, nature of soil etc. The process of deducing an average rate from each kind of soil was simplified. The rough estimate of the value per acre of ' Moti' soil was calculated in the following way:(25)

Wheat - 1 acre - 7 maunds	Rs. 11-13-0
Reductions (seeds interest)	Rs. 5-0-0
Balance	Rs. 6-13-0

This was to be divided by two which would make the zamindar's share, or rent, amount to Rs. 3. But by assuming only half the land to be sown with wheat and the rest with jowar and gram, the profits were calculated in following way:-

Jowar	1 acre	5 maunds	Rs. 6-0-0
Reductions			Rs. 1-3-2
Balance			Rs. 4-12-10
Zamindar's share was			Rs. 2-6-5

i.e. 1/2 of the profit was the zamindars. Similarly from wheat and gram the percentage was same. In addition the (der do anna) so called from adding to the crop rate, half the amount plus two annas. These cesses therefore had to be treated as part of the actual rent, and as in the settlement jumabundes all charges for rent were lumped together. (26)

<sup>been</sup>  
It has <sup>been</sup> seen that unlike as in the preceeding years when settlements were harsh and demanding, the officers now conducting were more understanding and perceived the situation. But the failings persisted. Col. Davidson in tracing the past history of the district and the effect of the summary settlement made by the British officers in the early years of British administration had shown, that they pressed severely on the people as mentioned earlier. The figures were based on inaccurate data of the village papers, hence large balances accrued at different times.

It was essential and sagacious that assessing officers

should have started with reductions and that a light and moderate assessment was essential for the prosperity of the country. In the absence of any reliable data, to the area, soils, irrigation which formed the basis of all the settlements, the recorded rentals which were taken in cash, were somewhat trustworthy. But then authencity was doubtful. Some paraganas were over assessed, assessments were too high, proprietary right were not confirmed or recognised. The basic questions were not tackled or sought to be solved with the result ad hoc calculations were made to retrieve revenues. This had grave consequences in the years to come. Some villages fell into the hands of monied class who were able to retain land and they sought to squeeze as much as they could from the ryots in the shape of rent.

There was however another class of people who benefitted from this settlement at the expense of the people. The district officers thinking that they might test the paying capacities of the villagers or perhaps were anxious to show that they performed well by retrieving maximum from the cultivatos, accepted the highest offer quite irrespective of the fitness or otherwise of the trader who was least interested in the welfare of the estate.

Further, when settlements were made, extensive demarcation, of black and red soil villages, was not feasible hence the best and worst villages were grouped together indiscriminately. Settlements were fixed after that true rental value of the land was calculated and the figure was always on

the higher side. Appeals made against the present settlement were dismissed.

To add to all these problems the famine of 1868-69 greatly enhanced the seriousness of the situation. The demands continued to be same, when reductions were necessary.

**Banda : Settlements upto 1874.**

The revenue administration of the district began with the arrival of Captain John Baillie. When the British were expanding their territory the new settlements were increasingly adding to the British revenue. In the pre-British days local revenue assessments were heavy and more so there was not much uniformity in the pattern of settlements or collection.

Baillie was succeeded by Erskine, who conducted the first regular settlement. The details are incomplete and there was progressive enhancement. Local revenue assessed throughout the district and although 1/11th of the estimated assets was allowed to the proprietors, the settlements he made were unfavourable. The only important fact was that the regularity in collection was instituted and the revenue establishment of the district was made permanent.(27) Erskine was succeeded by Wauchope who introduced the trienneial settlement with an increase of 12% on his predecessor's assessment. It has been analysed as one of the severest assessment in revenue history. Never had such a steep demand been inflicted without supplementing or augmenting the resources of the cultivators who would then be able to pay. In the existing conditions it was the

severity of the new assessments which had retrogressive effects on the cultivation which exhibited signs of extinction.(28) To add fuel to fire, S. Waring who took charge of the district after Wauchope, started settlements upon principles of auction sales and sold the land and fixed the revenue upon the basis of competition. and without judging of the ability of his subordinates for their skill in framing estimates to support an increased demand. It led to the transfer of many estates and to the compulsory sale of others and numbers of the proprietors willing to pay the revenue, later didn't want to do so. The proceeds from sales were frequently insufficient to provide the arrears and in some cases there were no buyers. Waring's enhancements amounted a 40% incrrease which was a death blow to the agricultural community of Banda.(29) Successive officers continued this tradition of constantly increasing the settlement in view of the fact that agricultural prosperity was optimum in this part of the district. Hence, it became a tradition for the British officerys to increase the percentage to elevate their individual status. It has been noticed that the British policy of moderation was overtaken by a lust for increased revenue.(30) Banda and other Bundelkhand districts had suffered from the onslaught of incursions by marauders an it was tested to the utmost to defray the expense incurred in pursuance of the new policy. Money was required and Bundelkhand was destined to pay its full quota. In reviewing the past fiscal history of the district as then dscribed, the variation of land revenue demand presented a remarkable contrast. The revenue assumed in the earlier settlements was believed to represent a large proportion

of the assets than that assessed at a later settlement. This then was the condition when Alan Cadell took over this district.

**Cadell's settlement. 1874.**

When Cadell took over, the distress of the agricultural community was most serious. From 1869-70, the area under cultivation had fallen from 6,53,583 acres to 5,43,353 acres and as the best soils of all had been abandoned, the loss in rental was in a still larger proportion to the former assets of the district.(31) The government was unsuccessful in realising the revenue from estates under direct management. The settlement returns showed a decrease in the cultivated areas as that of preceding settlements. The total assessable area had increased by 46,531 acres (from 9,58,863 to 10,05,394 acres). This increase was due to a stricter classification of soil brought under cultivation. The decrease in the cultivated area in the years of 1870 - 73 was due to "Kans" grass and excessive unseasonal rainfall.(32)

When settlement operations began under Cadell, the black soil tracts were only beginning to emerge from the serious distress with which they had been struggling, while the villages with light and uneven soil were moderately prosperous and contended. The classification of soils was done according to their productivity. The proportion of the cultivated area for which actual and existing soil rates were ascertainable was 48%. These assumed soil rates acted as a guide towards determining the rent rates.(33) The assumed rates having been fixed and a

fresh basis for an estimate of the assets and which would form the basis of the revised rentroll. With this in view the applicability of the assumed rates was tested by the lump rents of the village and with the aid of the village ascertained rates and notes made at inspection suitable rates were fixed. These were then applied to the soil areas under cultivation and in this way a prima facie suitable rental was obtained by comparison with other estimates. Cadell contended that the falling off in the cultivated area in the Banda district had been so large that the recorded area of the new settlement was an obviously untrustworthy basis of assessment.(34)

He took up the standard area of cultivation on which the government demand should have been assessed. He abandoned his original proposal of assessing uniformity in the cultivation of the large settlement. The standard assumed by Cadell was 6,53,256 acres. The rental of the assumed standard cultivation by assumed circle rates was estimated by Cadell at Rs. 16,93,658. The jama proposed by him was Rs. 1,88,930 and a sum of Rs. 1,56,416 below the jama of 1282 fasli which the assumed soil rates on existing cultivation would have justified. His assumed jama rates were considered to be moderate.(35)

The term of the revised settlement ran from the commencement of 1288 fasli, when the last enhanced reivesd jamas came in force which were much lighter than that of all his predecessors. His intention was not to burden the cultivator, but to introduce a gradual progressive demand. The final demand was proposed at Rs. 1,35,000. The application of suitable

village rates to the actual cultivation of the year of settlement would have yielded a revenue of Rs. 7,31,947 at a revenue rate of Re. 1-5-3 per acre. In addition 1,01,269 fallow acres were assessed. The net revenue on this area was Rs. 56,963 which fell to the exceedingly low revenue rate of 9 annans per acre. It will be seen that Cadell while avowedly assessing on an assumed standard of 6,53,256 acres had by the low rates assessment actually dropped his standard in a large number of cases. For a while the rental of the assumed standard was calculated on circle rates which then justified a jama of Rs. 8,81,832. The revenue actually assessed was not more than Rs. 7,88,930 a difference of Rs. 72,902. (36)

Cadell had good reasons to introduce moderate assessments in Banda district. The idea of introducing progressive assessments was dropped as existing assessments worked well. Even though the Board of Revenue left the question of progressive jama to the settlement officer. In this case Cadell based his discretion very discreetly in the case of paragana Banda in which alone the new assessments came into force before the district had had time to recover from its sufferings. Later throughout the five paraganas progressive assessments had been imposed.

It must be taken into consideration that rules were rough standards and were liable to constant modification according to the varying circumstances of particular villages. Cadell's assessments were open to the fact that progressive jamas were not proposed in his time, settlement officers did not

adhere to any standard but took into account the existing state of affairs. In fact his rates were considered moderately low so that there was a decrease of revenue. He intended not to burden the cultivators unduly. Consequently, as mentioned earlier the progressive demand was proposed and it would work upto the full demand of Rs. 1,35,000.(37)

Cadell was of the opinion that the assessments should be divided into four instalments. The reason attributed was that very large advance collections had been made in this district within the preceding two years.(38) He was sympathetic to the cultivator's cause that collection dates should have been fixed as to be suitable for all seasons. Instead of collecting advances, the best rule he suggested was to collect when the people had the capacity to pay, a pragmatic approach. Advances 'collecting' were nearly all paid by landlords, who collected rents. The village community did not pay till after the instalment was due.

Banda district had been ruined by over assessment in the early years of British occupation. This resulted as in other parts in frequent transfers, neglect of agriculture etc. Reduced assessments were allowed in the Tahsils of Badausa and Sihenda from 1287 fasli, but not until after the revenue had been collected. In this way part of the revenue for the unfavourable seasons of 1808-81 was collected in the prosperous years of 1879-80. Extra rents saved in the good years were accumulated to pay up for the years of poor harvest. This did not inflict or cause extra strain on the payment of dues in the bad years.(39)

In conclusion one may say that Banda was given a step treatment with regard to the assessments made yearly. Even if the zamindars paid up by the stipulated dates they were subject to mistreatment by the tehsildars, that payment was to have been made earlier. This severity of extortion of revenue resulted in general decline in agriculture.

It is to be observed that a rigid system of fixing and enforcing during a prescribed period a full revenue demand was not suited to Bundelkhand. "It was better to lose revenue than to injure and destroy". An important factor to be mentioned here is that inspite of the reductions he instituted he was not sympathetic infact. He was forced to allow reductions in revenue rate because the previous rates were beyond the paying capacity of the cultivations. Moreover, Cadell seemed to be very wise. The aim behind 31% reductions was to give stability to the British in Central India. He knew that Bundelkhand was the main centre of the revolt of 1857. Though he never wanted to buy the anger of the people by increasing the rates of revenue, Cadell, infact looked after the British interests and was not genuinely sympathetic to the Indian cause. His settlement which commenced in 1873, lasted for twenty years till 1892, during which period the cultivators were not really benefitted.

### Karwi

The Karwi tract lies in the eastern corner of the Banda district and forms an irregular triangle. The southern part consisted of broken hilly country. In 1805, Captain Baillie

summed up the existing settlement followed by Erkine who made a three year settlement (1806-1810.A.D.) for Rs. 3,79,879. (40)

These early settlements were merely continuation of the old demand. The government wanted to make the settlement permanent as it stood in 1808 A.D., but it could not be executed. Considerable arrears accrued. The second settlement was conducted by Wauchope (1804-12 A.D.) who hiked the revenue to Rs. 3,86,632. This hike was unjustified and the government feared that in the lack of capacity to pay up, the land would be thrown out of cultivation. Orders were thereby issued for the remission, keeping in view the area of waste land in each village. (41)

During the years between 1815-16 A.D., the country witnessed a period of prosperity which Waring took advantage of to raise the revenue demand to Rs. 4,81,450.

Below is given a table to show the steady increase in the successive settlements to extract the maximum feasible to the utter ruin of the people and zamindars:-

	Baillie	1st Settl.	1214-1216 fasli	Rs. 3,79,877
1804-12	Wauchope	2nd "	1217-1219 "	Rs. 3,86,632
1815-16	Waring	3rd "	1223-1227 "	Rs. 4,81,450
		4th "	1228-1232 "	Rs. 4,62,399
		5th "	1233-1237 "	Rs. 4,60,507
1833		6th "	1241-1255 "	Rs. 4,15,056
1848		7th " under Reg. IX of		
		1833(1250-1279) "		Rs. 4,43,874
	Mayne	8th "	1267 "	Rs. 3,60,183

Patterson	1868 A.D.	"	Rs. 3,57,842
			Rs. 3,45,105

From the above table it is clear that until 1868, when Mayne brought peace to the area by lowering the demand to Rs. 3,60,183, and again by 3.6% but the demands continued to be high. The value of land commenced rising again. The reductions were liberal, followed by a series of good seasons. Karwi gradually recovered and an <sup>era</sup> ~~era~~ of prosperity ensued. But again 1868-69 was a year of drought and scarcity which cast untold miseries on the people.

#### Patterson's Assessment 1878-79.

Patterson commenced his work of the Karwi sub-division in 1877-78. It consisted at that time of 110 acres roughly. The system pursued in Karwi was based on C.A. Elliot in Farrukhabad, modified so as to suit the circumstances of the district. As Elliot had described his method, ~~and~~ revaluation had been effected and this was the most important branch of the settlement work. (42)

According to the system, the inspecting officer tested as many entries as possible in the Khasra and where erroneous, corrected them at the same time, taking into consideration the capabilities of the villages. The draw back was that in the Khasra entries there was nothing to find out the soil rates and entries in the area. He could only test fields at random and further that was no accuracy in the calculation and also the facts presented to him were not entirely correct. Consequently,

authentic data was not available to assess the villages.

The most important factor was the "actual rents paid". Rates prevailing for each classification of soil was mooted. The Sir or rent free lands were separated and where even known rents were paid on fields they were collected and taken as basis. It helped form guidelines too. Where lump rates were paid the bases were analysed and the village rate elicited at inspection. As a rule the rates actually paid in the best soils were far below the conventional or standard rates which represented the value of the land. In the mar villages as also in the Kabar the rates fell below the traditional standard rates. Rates on inferior lands were sometimes too high, as when rates were fixed besides the rents, other factors were also taken into consideration.

Karwi soil was inferior to Banda and Palani. Patterson made allowances on the well manured and cultivated soils. First class mar consisted of 1.9% of the total area of 2198 acres. 1158 acres paid known rates and the rest paid lump rates. The rate was very low for such a soil, and amounted to only Rs. 2-13-11 per acre. Yet Re. 1-8-0 to Re. 1-12-0 per bigha was stated as the recognized mar rate Rs. 3-1-0 to Rs. 4 per acre. For first class Kabar the lower rate was fixed at Rs. 2-15-0 and the rate per cultivated acre was Re. 1-3-1, and he further made a reduction of 3.6% on the existing payments of Rs. 3,45,105. (44)

In all classes, Patterson reduced the rent rates depending on the nature and extent of the productive soil. In the eastern part of Karwi the land improved and mar soil

extended to a large area. Problems were created as settlement officers took the black soil to be the best and levied high rates, with the result that land which was brought under cultivation in 1286 fasli was paying a higher rent even though it had not reached the full rate paid by mar soil under prosperous circumstances there was a rise in rentals due to a rise in prices which increased the prosperity of the tract. But this was an artificial prosperity as there had been no great increase in cultivation nor in population. Higher demand produced disastrous results.(45)

An important factor of note is that in the Karwi district as in other Bundelkhand settlements, the ordinary standard of cultivation had not varied in the thirty years, not that it had been taken for cultivation and settlement, but the yearly variation of the cultivable area was very large. This misled settlement officers and consequently ruined the district.

Patterson endeavoured to obtain standard areas, and at least for one paragana had added a round sum to the corrected rentals on this account. He pointed out that a policy of low jamas did not suit Bundelkhand. It involved unnecessary loss, and withdrew stimulant to zamindars and tenants and further it did not save the state in bad years. Intelligent and vigilant revenue addition was required.(46)

It is necessary to mention that settlements in Karwi as in other part of Bundelkhand were effected without any knowledge of the capabilities of estates and were chiefly based upon the

information and opinion furnished by the local officers. It could not therefore be expected that the demands should be very equitable upon such vague and uncertain data. The idea was to increase the revenue, the means did not matter as long as the increase was effected and it was received as an indication of prosperity and limits to the power and possibility of paying appear never to have been contemplated. It was the general belief that the agricultural population could pay up, the more pressed the more they could cough up. In the case of Waring, he was motivated to secure the maximum for the British Government and did not care for the financial results of his squeeze. No limit was adopted and the seized estates went to the highest bidder. There was even a suggestion to sell of estates to recover government dues. The Board of Revenue Sanctioned the settlements. (46)

As a direct consequence of the high rate of revenue the areas sold to recover arrears continued to increase. The amount realised from the sale of the land was 4% of the years revenue. But these added to the detriment of the year instead of cultivable acreage increasing, it decreased from 3,27,621 acres to 3,08,037 or by 6%. Added to this was fact that in Bundelkhand cycle of magnificent harvests, during which heavy revenues were collected and paid with ease, was followed by period of depression and scarcity during which the highest demand of rigidly collected revenues caused great distress. No allowances were made for these facts. (49)

Patterson's settlement was not as severe as those of

his predecessors, but it was also hard, with the result that the region faced ruin, otherwise in a relatively prosperous region.

### **Hamirpur.**

Hamirpur was ceded to the British in 1803-04 A.D. In 1805, Erskine was appointed Collector and remained incharge of the district for the years and made first two settlements. As in other parts of Bundelkhand paraganas and tahsils, Hamirpur also reeled under heavy settlements. As there was no proper demarcation of the district, the total could not be arrived at. Heavy balances accrued, in addition to the vagaries of weather which further caused destruction of crops and cultivation. There was a 40% increase in the assessment by Erskine who justified it by adding that in the context of a bumper harvest, the people would be able to pay up. There was no uniformity in assessment, the eastern paraganas were settled in a moderate manner, whereas the western were pressurized under heavy demands. Subsequent settlement officers all envisaged to obtained the maximum from the people to fill the British coffers. Little or no attention was paid to the disastrous results of this policy.

### **Allen and Muir's settlement: 1842-48**

When Allen took over the settlement of the district he was not quite conversant with the area so that he was not in a position to classify the district. Previously tehsildars were called upon to classify the villages according to the soil. This system was most inaccurate, further reliance was placed on the profitability of the villages than on the goodness of the soils.

Basing his calculations on previous figures of rates, he subtracted 1/3rd to form the revenue rates and this was his first basis. Rent rates were formed by putting Re. 1-12-0 on every acre of Malgozaree cultivation in the village and 4 annas on the cultivated land. Rates were assumed after considerable investigation and were applied to every village but they were found to be too high.(48) Besides the above mentioned calculation he had special ones for each village - first the particular village rates per bigha were applied to the number of bighas given in the measurement papers and from the rental thus obtained he deducted 40% but this could not be uniformly determined as there was no uniform standard of the bigha in the village. He made assessments of previous jamas and concluded that the revenue collected under duress from 'Capital' and not from village assets was beneficial.(49) Consequently he initiated the system of introducing 'proposed' jama system, by which there was an ultimate decrease in the proposed jama. A gradual and steady decrease afforded relief to the cultivators. Resumed Maafee patches of land also came under settlement for the first time and revenue was paid out of the projects of the maafee. Below are given figures to show the proposed jama and the actual collected from the five paragans.(50)

--- Jama assumed by deduced Revenue Rates .... Rs. 7,95,857.

--- Proposed jama .... Rs. 6,71,833.

The settlement of 1842 was not quite what the situation warranted but it was a step towards retrieving the bad situation. Revision of the settlement in the north of the district was

necessary. Previous over assessments had led to disastrous calamities. It was impetuous to try restore the district to its pristine abundance by a rational and moderate approach so as to encourage cultivation. Settlement of people and accumulation of capital to resume prosperity. It was potential to develop the fallow lands and the British anticipated a heavy return on these lands. But the necessary factors required to make them cultivable were not forthcoming. Consequently the anticipated results did not bear fruit.

Had the revenue settlement been more sagaciously levied, the district would not have suffered in so much as to divest it of people. Cultivation and thereon capital emanating from the revenue accruing from settlement, levied on crops and soil. The harsh settlements had devastating effects. It was a lesson for the future settlements which were not to be exacting. This had a four fold effect.

- i) the poor collection of revenue.
- ii) the losses registered on the occasion.
- iii) Abandonment of land and the departure and migration of cultivators, uncultivated land kept fallow. Subsequently these lands were thrown out of cultivation and in course of time it was difficult to reclaim and bring under cultivation.
- iv) Money lenders flourished, but eventually as people could not pay back the debts, land changed hands.

This inherent idea amongst the settlement officers that

the greater the pressure executed, the more the outturn of revenue was a soundless one and it undermined the very roots of economic stability on which the British imperialistic designs nurtured. It was a misconception that the eagerness and enthusiasm with which the zamindars wanted to retrieve their properties was not a proof that the settlement was light. It was an inert desire to reclaim his family property. The poverty of the whole district and the utter valuelessness of landed property were indisputable proof of over assessment.

Table showing settlements upto 1836 : (51)

1806	Rs. 5,92,123
1807	Rs. 5,98,216
1810	Rs. 6,66,093
1814	Rs. 6,72,681
1816	Rs. 8,43,438
1821	Rs. 8,24,848
1826	Rs. 7,93,809
1831	Rs. 6,83,281
1836	Rs. 6,66,200

### **Jalaun**

The territory of Jalaun except Koonch and Kalpi paragana came under the British jurisdiction in 1831. The four paraganas of Jalaun were formed out of the old Jalaun Rajaship. Orai, Kalpi, Jalaun and Koonch. Moth was transferred in 1854 and Bhanderi in 1856 to Jhansi.

Prior to 1869 summary settlements were carried out by the political officers in charge of the district. There were four summary settlements made. But these settlements were based on inaccurate measurements and on Maratta documents, showing a revenue much above what the country could properly pay and prosper. The assessment depended on the following factors. (52)

- a.) former settlements
- b.) number of acres.
- c.) number of cultivated acres.
- d.) number of cultivable acres.
- e.) number of waste acres.
- f.) number of well irrigated acres.
- g.) nature of soil.
- h.) patwari, kanungo and amin rates.
- i.) Proposed government demand at half rates.

Jalaun too had suffered from the early settlements which had been heavy and unjustified. The district was a wilderness and there was no agricultural progress and few villages existed. During the 1837 famine, thousands had died, and many migrated to Malwa. (53)

Lt. Doolon who took over in 1838 saw a ravaged district. He made a settlement for five years. His successor Ross increased the assessment by Rs. 30,752. This pattern of increasing, continued during the term of Erskine. He introduced the Punjab survey system by which the field survey on which the settlement was based was made by the village patwaris on the Punjab system and was the 1st Khusrah measurement (i.e.) measurement by

plane table) and on this plan attempted in the N.W.P.(54) The Erskine assessment was hard pressing in some quarters. His land tax was levied on a very thin population, when cultivation had not reached the desired level. Many left the district and took refuge in the Central Province. It must be mentioned that Erskine's demand was at a higher figure than the rental proposed by Major Ternan sixteen years later when the district had been brought under cultivation, when most of the Maafee land generally the most productive had been resumed.(55)

#### **Ternan's Settlement : 1861.**

Major Ternan took over in 1861 and settled the district of Jalaun comprising the paragans of Jalaun, Madhoharh, Kunnar, Attah and Orai and thirty more villages of old paragana Indurki. The settlement was for a period of twenty years i.e. from 1st July, 1861 to 30th June 1881 A.D. and was aware of the severity of his predecessor's assessment and its effect. He was of the opinion that "the previous assessments had always been too high.", and therefore when he took charge of the district after the rebellion he worked laboriously at the assessment.(56)

The criteria for settlement which was adopted by Major Ternan was

- i.) position of each village.
- ii.) situation with regard to others.
- iii.) position near water source.
- iv.) all other points of importance
- v.) nature of soil. (57)

In Jalaun Zilla the amount of resumed maafee lands including whole village patches, malikana and malgoozaree grants was 56,785 acres. These lands had been settled at half rental assests. When maafee tenures had been confiscated for rebellion, their possession had been forfeited and the maafeedar was converted into a hereditary cultivator. The total revenue demanded from this district was Rs. 9,45,800, on a total cultivated acreage of 44,095. (58)

In paragana Orai, Ternan says, " the greater part of the soil of the paragana was brought under cultivation but no improvement could be effected until European capital was put into it. A settlement could be beneficial only then".(59)

In Madhogarah paragana the malgoozars were very poor and the bet villages were in the hands of Mahajans. With the imposition of Ternan's, settlement, the population recovered from its exhaustion and there was a revival of agriculture. Major Ternan reduced the assessment by Rs. 12,990, thereby giving some relief to the cultivators. It was slightly complicated in the sense that the revised demand of Ternan encluded a large sum which was assessed on resumed land which had paid no revenue earlier. The assessment was not made upon any scientific or systematic plan.(60) A senior mamber of the Board of Revenue had visisted Jalaun, while the settlement was in progress in 1863 mentioned in a note - " In Jalaun instead of average rates (i.e. rates on the classes of soil on the paragana average), Major Terrnan adpoted a special set of rates for each village". These had formed the basis of his assessment.(61)

Major Ternan had ascertained as nearly as possible the actual rates in each village, based on the rent demanded from surrounding villages, which had similar locations, equal production capacity or otherwise with the same kind of soil.(62)

There was another assessment made chiefly on the jama bandis or rent rolls, "checked by a general reference to the rates, at which the revenue so calculated would fall as compared with neighbouring villages and influenced by local inquiry, to personnel knowledge of the circumstances and assets". We do not have much information regarding as to how he dealt with concealed assets or what measures he took for retrieving the amount which was the difference between the recorded rents and that actually collected.(63)

The cultivated area assessed for revenue was 4,55,224 acres and the cultivable area was 5,39,161 acres. The revenue assessment made for the cultivated area was Rs. 6,13,360 which amounted to Re. 1-5-10 per cultivated area and Re. 1-2-2 per culturable area, which was slightly higher than the Jhansi district, where the rate on cultivated area was Re.1-4-11, by the new assessment as the soil was rich.(64) In Hamirpur the rate per cultivable area was lower than in Jhansi i.e. Re. 0-15-2, inspite of Hamirpur and Jalaun paraganas having the same degree of fertility. The assessment on the whole was not as severe as the earlier ones.(65) In 1865-66, the rental assets stood at Rs. 13,73,905 half of which would give a revenue of Rs. 6,86,950 instead of Rs. 6,13,362.(66)

It is apparent that the amount of resumed rich lands formerly held by Mafeedars yielded revenue which compensated for the remission he made. In making the settlement Major Ternan endeavoured to secure a due return or surplus to the cultivator and farmer for their labour and risk at the same time he saw that a fair share of the rent or profit went to the Government. He took into consideration the prices of grain at the time, to work out how much the farmer was to pay to the government.

The year 1868-69 had been one of severe drought. Remissions were made and the cultivator was not hardpressed to pay his dues. The government under took the construction of canals and also recommended to make Jalaun district one of the most productive in India. (67)

The Jalaun settlement was exceptional in its character that it was not a revision of an elaborate settlement. It was carefully prepared and considering the agricultural conditions and other protracted interruptions a permanent settlement was not feasible. However, this settlement was fixed for twenty years.

We have seen the pattern of the settlements which were to extract optimum revenue from a practically incapable class whose livelihood depended on the soil they tilled. In the next chapter it will be seen how the second regular settlements worked. The first did not improve either the condition of the peasants, cultivators or land holders instead depleted them of all resources to regenerate revenue.

The above analysis of Revenue administration reveals the truth that the British had made it a policy to extract more and more revenue from the agriculturists so that the people could remain confined and poverty stricken. The economically backward inhabitants would be busy in searching for opportunities to meet both ends and thus they would not be in a position to raise their voice against the British. Moreover, had other objectives too. They gave concession in revenue rate to the people who were famous for their notoriety. It is because of this policy that the settlement officers allowed relaxation in the Bundela dominated villages in Lalitpur whereas the laborious peasants were heavily taxed. The British aimed that confining the socio-economic backwardness of Bundelkhand so the European missionaries could have easy access to this region. Thus they paved the way for the propaganda of Christianity in Bundelkhand.

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## Chapter 5

### SECOND REGULAR SETTLEMENTS OF THE DISTRICTS OF JHANSI, LALITPUR, BANDA, HAMIRPUR & JALAUN.

In the preceeding chapters we have seen how the imposition of the settlements adversely affected the economic history of Bundelkhand. That, to this day the region remains backward. This constant bid to re-settle the district caused confusion and a feeling of insecurity amongst the people. The basic idea as mentioned earlier was to raise the revenue and the means to be whatever it may have been. So long as an increase of revenue was obtained it was received as an indication of prosperity and the limit to the power and possibility of paying appears never to have been contemplated. Many inequalities of assessment occurred but no attempt was made to rectify the errors. Reductions were nominal with a view to appease certain section of revenue payers who could be utilized for the benefit of the British cause in Bundelkhand. This indirectly gave birth to a new class of people - the money lenders - to whom land was mortgaged. Nothing substantial was done to improve the irrigation which was so necessary for the cultivators.

In the course of the settlements, Bundelkhand passed through severe famines. No concertive effort was made in this region to alleviate the suffering of the people. One tends to contemplate on the fact that was this deliberate deprivation as follow up of Bundelkhand's contribution to the 1857 events. Why was such a harsh treatment meted towards Bundelkhand ? Under these circumstances the second regular settlements were

instituted.

**Jhansi** : 2nd Regular Settlement by Impey and Meston 1884.

In October, 1887, the decision was taken to hold a cadastral survey and start a settlement of the district and consequently in October 1888, the district was declared to be under settlement. The period was for twenty years.

Jhansi district as it stood in 1886 (inclusive of Lalitpur) was 1,494 sq. miles in area.(1) The condition of district was not encouraging. The cultivation had declined in contrast to the situation, at the commencement of the last settlement. The cultivable land fell from 3,93,401 acres to 3,55,629.(2) Except for some medieval tanks constructed by the Hindu Rajas, irrigation was not introduced to the benefit of the cultivators who still relied on natural rain or, used water from wells. Moreover, Kans problem was not tackled effectively, so as to completely bring about an extension in agriculture. Though the Betwa canal was constructed since the last settlement as a protective measure against drought it was scarcely used in Jhansi district.

Owing to the unculturable, as it was barren the sparse population, cultivation never reached its optimum level. In 1889-92, 42% of the total culturable area was cultivated and in 1903, it was 33% only. This manifests itself in the neglect of agriculture and the governmental apathy towards it.(3) Though the increase in population during the decade of 1881-89 was approximately 7.21% but this barely made up for the losses from

emigration and disease during the periods, of agricultural depression.(4)

Impey and Meston undertook the task of inspecting the areas under their jurisdiction. The settlement officer's inspections were undertaken to satisfy them that the verified rent rolls correctly represented the rental actually existed and to enable them to frame correct rentals.(5) As in previous settlements the officers ascertained and their credibility tested by analysis of field and field rents. For the purpose of assessment soils were classified. Villages were grouped into assessment circles, differential soil rates were declared in the manner prescribed by rules.(6) As in other parts of Bundelkhand, the soil classification was done according to natural distinction - viz. mar, kabar, parua and rakan. Villages were grouped together according to the soil, into assessment circles mainly with reference to their rental incidences. Consideration should have been given to facilities available but this was not so.(7) The chief use of these assessment circles was to bring together groups of villages to which the same set of rates could be applied for the purposes of correcting the rent rolls. The idea was to give assessment circles a fairly homogenous character.

Lump rates were analysed with recorded rates and compared with actual rents. If the rates were supported by rentals they were accepted, but where it was not so, they were taken as indicating the comparative value of the different soils and this gave a scale from which rates could be deduced from the recorded

rent which were again analysed.(9) Mention should be made of the fact that there was a comparatively high incidence of the assumed rental especially in the case of the sir lands, cultivated by proprietors.(10) This was highly improper as to increase rental value of this class of land just on grounds of its superiority, and the output not being taken into consideration.

The methods and calculation by which the rental assets of the district were ascertained formed the basis of the assessment.(11) Settlement officer's framed circles and chose rate after inspection . Final classification was effected after the inspection of the whole tahsil had been completed.(12) In Jhansi, tehsils were divided topographically and not into paraganas.(13) It thus appears that the classification was based on the consideration of rents. Great weight was given to this factor. It is not proper and correct to use or equate as a standard for determining assessment, rent rates of land. The British corresponded generally rents rates with its natural advantages and rental capacity. Further, they forced the rents on custom and not actual calculation and findings. The fixing of rentals depended entirely on the whims of the settlement officers.Further, in due course of time certain villages may have bettered its capacity to pay rent. Consequently a revision was necessary on the other hand some areas would require remission on account of inability to pay.

Classification was based on the state of the villages at the existing time or when settlements took place. This was a major flaw as due to several reasons the productivity of the soil

could diminish and the rates once imposed would be difficult to alter. Impey and Meston have agreed that the classification of the sub-division was advantageous in respect that an appropriate set of standard rates was established.(14) But this was not so. If the rakar or parua tract had been left as one circle of similar soil to certain extent of similar advantages, it would have been extremely difficult to select, with such very different villages, single set of standard rates for the circle which would have been impossible to secure that the rates selected should correspond to any great extent with the rates actually paid the circle. Such rates were merely average if not inapplicable, when standard rentals were calculated.

In connection with the question of formation of circles and selection of standard rates it became necessary to determine the rent rates to be assumed on the basis of the actual rents - to be paid per acre for each class of soil as no rates were actually on record of having been paid. Further, the recorded rates in the rent rolls or old wajib-ul-arzes were obviously not a correct and safe guide to rental affinity.

Once the standard rates were selected three kinds of rent rates were calculated. This gave rise to serious anomalies in the system. There were several lacunae. In case of villages half cultivated by tenants and half by proprietors, the rates were based on the actual rents which were calculated on the basis of natural advantages and rents.(15) In the grain rented land, assessment on the grain produce was of no value. Hence, payments were made on cash rents between the time of survey and time of

inspection.

Under these circumstances, extension of cultivated land was never permanent and the rapid changes in the area together with the nature of fluctuating cultivation in the Jhansi area that made it impossible for a steady cultivation.

The settlement was not a productive one in that it gave rise to complications regarding the payment of revenue at the stipulated time. Cultivation fell by 9%. There was an increase of 18% in the settlement which was highly unjustifiable and grossly unjust. Famines which ravaged Bundelkhand at this time, further broke the rent paying capacity but the government did not allow respite and in the following chapter we shall see the revenue levied on the district.

Lalitpur Hoare 1893

The decision to revise the former settlement of Lalitpur sub-division was decided in 1893. Accordingly it was cadastrally surveyed in 1895, 1896 and 1897. Though the operation was not profitable one but a revision was considered advisable on administrative grounds. Village maps had become obsolete, the question of the states of the land holders was an important question which had to be discussed and settled. Further serious irregularities in the existing assessments called for a redress. (17) "Owing to the precariousness of the nature of cultivation in Bundelkhand, revenue assessment presented greater difficulties than in any other part of the province." - J.O. Miller, who was chief secretary in a letter to the Government of

N.W.F. and Oudh.

For revenue purposes Lalitpur was divided into two tahsils - Lalitpur and Mehroni. The total area under cadastral survey which preceeded the settlement operations was 11,53,372 acres. Out of this 4,37,734 acres or rather about a third contained the black soil tract which monopolises the southern portion of the sub-division.(18) The actual area under cultivation was 2,76,864 acres which indicates a decline of 19,157 acres.(19) This was a result of the severity of settlement. Lalitpur was subjected to serious agricultural depression culminating in the famine of 1303 fasli and 1304 fasli, 1894-96.

Hoare commenced with his settlement. The soil was chiefly black where cultivated and rest of the area there was red soil. The differentiation of the sub-division into red and black soil tracts was the most important for revenue purposes. Hoare based his assessment on reliable recorded rental of the year in question.(20) This information was supplied by patwaris. But the important fact here is the reliability of the information as the patwaris did not keep up dated maps, calculation and the fluctuating cultivation. Consequently, Hoare could not base his calculation on actual circle rates. Instead the tenants cash rental of the year of record was generally accepted as a basis for assessment, except in cases of "Pahi" cultivation.(21) In areas of excessive fluctuating cultivation the average rental of the year of verification was taken as the basis of circle rates.(22) The real problem of settlement rose in the assessment of the

depreciated villages which formed the bulk of the black soil tracts. It was unfair on the part of the Government to assess for a long period on the depreciated assets of the year of record and consequently summary settlements became necessary.

Hoare further faced difficulty in that five out of seven paraganas showed the effects of calamities such as weather vagaries. In the remaining two paragans in the year of verification, that it 1302 fasli, the result of the famine were visible. There was a decline in the cultivated acreage, and the valuable rabi crop. Under the circumstances it was advisable to either postpone or order a new survey.(23)

Those villages in which assets of 1303 fasli were fairly equal to or greater than the normal assets, such villages were assessed once for the usual time. Secondly, those villages in which the assets of 1303 fasli were fairly equal to normal assets, but which suffered temporarily, such villages were to be assessed at a reduced jama for three years founded on the estimated assets of 1305 fasli. The full jama was payable after three years and ran till the end of the period of settlement.(24) Hoare decided to fix a normal jama and periodically inspection and revision of assessment would be made till the normal demand was reached. But these valuations were not foolproof. Consideration of ability to payment was not even a major factor in extracting revenue from the impoverished peasants and cultivators. There is hardly any mention of the measures taken by the government to induce agricultural prosperity to enable the revenue payers to be able to meet the demands. Reduction on the

jamas did not make any difference as the amount payable was always and unreasonable one.

In the remaining paraganas, villages which had not suffered from severe deterioration, such villages were assessed on the figure of record. Those which had suffered from quasi permanent deterioration, they were settled for five years in the estimated assets of 1305 fasli.(25) For these village a normal demand was fixed and a revised demand was realised from 1311 fasli, on calcualtions based on the figures of 1310 fasli.(26) Though revision of settlement took place at regular intervals till the areas were in a capacity to pay the normal demand, it was not possible to achieve this except under duress.

It is evident as figures prove that the settlements were unequal and not uniform in their incidence and many cases of over assessment occured. In villages where indication of slight development were sighted, higher revenue was extracted from them.

Villages were grouped into circles as far as possible on topographical divisions. But circles were unduly multiplied and villages grouped more in accordance with their size and importance than the rates realized in them. Previous methods of that settlement were an assesment on assets which were a compromise between valuation at circle rates and actual recorded assets.(27)

Reductions were insignificant. Hoare initiated a decrease of Rs. 9,134-1-7 or 6.06% in real revenue. This demand of 1306 fasli increased after a course of progressive demands and an

increase of 8.16% in real revenue on the expiring demand. The period for which the demand was proposed was thirty years. (28)

During Hoare's tenure the condition of the sub-division had deteriorated. Since the last settlement the spring crop had reduced by 50%. (29) There was a depreciation in black soil and mixed soil tracts. The red soil tracts had made steady progress in all paraganas. As the red soil villages paid revenue steadily, they were made to bear the brunt of immediate enhancement in revenue falls. Though the incidence of normal revenue on cultivated area had increased from .63% to .70% but its incidents on culturable area had decreased from .20% to .19% owing to an increase in culturable area due to more correct soil classification. (30)

Though Lalitpur came on the Railway map the improvement was negligible and it continued to remain in much the same state as earlier. There was no change in the character of proprietary rights nor was there any change in the general agricultural scene as to justify or warrant any great changes in revenue. It continued to be in a apathetic condition till it was absorbed in the Jhansi constituency.

**Hamirpur** Neale 1880

Hamirpur had not revived in any way since the last settlement and remained backward. This resulted in the continuous low payments of revenue which was natural.

When Neale was appointed the settlement officer the

administration was in a chaotic state. He reviewed the earlier settlements and pointed out that the preceding officers did not have exclusive experience and hence the improprieties in the revenue system. He attempted to rectify and accurately measure and get maps by professional survey officers. The famines of the preceding years, the depopulation and distress of the country, the following off in the cultivation, the great fall in the value of land, the large number of village under the management of government officers owing to the balances of revenue, contributed to the stupendous task, Neale had to face. The previous settlement amounted to Rs. 10,84,395 and this increase was chiefly due to the resumption of revenue free lands and assessment of alluvial and pasture lands. (31)

Neale incorporated Mr. Smith's method who had settled Hamirpur and Sumerpur paragans in the Hamirpur district, there was an unusually large proportion of land recorded as paying known rents, or in lump sum for each field, in fact nearly half the cultivated area paid in such a manner. Rest of the land paid lump rents in an aggregate holding which comprised of many different soils. (32) But this system was inadequate and useless for the investigating officer's purpose. (33) Neale stuck the system of rates or of lump sums for each field. But it is to be noted that there was one flaw that all the rates for the same soil were not uniform consequently the inclusion of very low rates reduced the average of the whole and if they were not included they converted the process of collecting average rates into a process of selecting suitable rates which was a totally

different system.

Another way of erasing the anomalies of the inequalities was to select standard villages (or model villages) which paid a fair rent for the soils they comprised, thereby raising the rates of other villages. In order to meet the disadvantages of relying heavily on average rates collected indiscriminately, Neale rectified the rates in the standard or model villages.(34) Further, the rates were made flexible depending on the soil and customs of the paraganas.(35) e.g. In paragona Hamirpur an average of Rs. 4-12-2 per acre, while in Mahoba on the same soil, Rs. 3-4-3 per acre was taken. The difference was 3% - 5%.(36) This is to prove the wide disparity and any attempt which was made to bring about an average, resulted in violent reactions. Some paraganas like Rath, northern Mahoba were assessed by Smith while Hamirpur, Sumerpur and Jalalpur by Neale.(37)

One has to admit that the task faced by Neale was stupendous as to synthesize the different prevailing rates and devise a uniformity to enforce on the whole district. Neale proposed seventeen different rates for each of the seven paraganas.(38) To confront such a complex situation was a problem for Neale who resorted not to make any radical changes in the prevailing system. The number of classes accorded to the soil in most of the paraganas was four.(39) Then taking class 1 into consideration he deduced Rs. 5-5-6 to Rs. 4-1-10 . The average rate worked out was Rs.s 4-12-6. This was the average rate for mar.(40) Parua soil was fixed at Rs. 4-5-6 to Rs 2-3-0. The total cultivated area for the whole district was 7,35,758 acres of

which 49% paid an average rate of Rs. 2-9-9 per acre.(41) This way all the soils were classified and the rates fixed. But the returns proved conclusively that the settlement statistics was good deal below the average. Consequently, the question was decided in the area of cultivation which was eventually put down as 37,762 acres.(42)

In 1877 and 1878, two seasons of almost unprecedented drought ensued. Consequently, in many villages reductions were resolved upon. Assumptions had been made regarding the extension of cultivation. These assumptions were largely modified with reference to the system of average standard of cultivation adopted in the assessment of the Banda district.(43)

Neale was in no way a partisan of <sup>Sharing</sup> ~~shewing~~ the woes of the cultivators, instead in addition to the jama declared on the cultivated and cultivable area, on the usual principles of assessment, a special conditional jama was fixed in a certain part of the forest area, with the object of inducing the zamindars preserve country and hills. He calculated the average rate on actual assessing which worked out to Rs. 2-14-2.(44) Inspite of the repercussions of famine which ravaged the district, Rs. 9450 more was collected in 1289 fasli, Rs. 2580 in 1293 fasli, Rs. 840 in 1295 fasli and the remaining balance of Rs. 460 in 1297 fasli.

Following the settlement and in the years ensuing land was partitioned and mortgages took place. It is shocking to note Neale's statement in which he says "Warring's persistant over

assessment was indeed fortunate event in the history of the district, because it warranted reduction in the long run. The high assessment could not be put in execution.(45)

This negative approach towards Bundelkhand to restrict the growth of the area into prosperous region as Bengal, was highly condemnable. It has been repeatedly pointed out that Bundelkhand was an area where speculative fixation of land revenue was not suitable. Yet the settlement officer paid little heed to the prevailing conditions with the result that instead of progression, the district steadily slipped back into deterioration. Economic depredation of the cultivator class led to outbursts of mass migration, fall in cultivation and resorts to dacoity in the area. Further, there was a tendency of growth of the money lending class - the advent of the "Marwari".

Jalaun            White    1889

The last settlement of this area was sanctioned for twenty years from July 1st 1863 to 30th January 1883, but continued to be in force in the case of two paragans (Orai and Jalaun) till 20th June 1886 and in the case of the remaining three paragans till 30th June 1887.

There was a large increase in the uncultivated but culturable land partly due to land having been thrown out of cultivation in anticipation of resettlement and partly because of some land having been transferred from 'barren' to 'cultivable' as land from the former category was changed to culturable.(46) The British Government took this as wilful abandonment of cultivation

on the part of the cultivators to avoid increase of revenue at the existing settlement.(47) They were of the opinion that at the last settlements, that is at the time of Ternan, land which had been classified as barren was in fact really culturable. Ternan had based his settlement on 4.32,199 acres of cultivation. On this calculation there was an increase of about 9.1% in cultivation since the last settlement.(48) This proves that the cultivators were not wilfully avoiding the cultivation of land as has been presented by the British Government.

Mr. White who was appointed settlement officer advocated a revision of revenue as there was a substantial return in the shape of increased returns of revenue. The assessment of the new revenue was to be based as far as possible on the average actual recorded rental. Rent rolls were to be corrected. To serve their own interest, leniency was shown towards Bhaichara brotherhood and other communities of cultivating land holders.(49)

The total area to be settled was 9,90,662 acres comprising of five paraganas of Orai, Jalaun, Madhogarh, Koonch and Kapli. Right at the onset, Mr. White raised the jamas and revised the kistbandis for the collection of revenue. He raised the jama on revenue free tenures also from Rs. 6,28,474 to Rs. 7,40,338. The increase in the revenue from both sources, i.e. Khalsa and resumed muafis was Rs. 7,54,229.(50)

White personally inspected every village before assessment, going over its lands, noting the quality of its soils and of standing crops and need enquiries into the prevailing

rent rates, general condition of the proprietary and the tenantry and all factors which had a bearing on the revenue to be fixed. After examining the village rent rolls and collecting them with his inspection statements he classified the villages i.e. formed standard circles of assessment.(51) In the paraganas of Koonch of Jalaun and Madhogarah he formed four classes or circles of assessment and in the paraganas of Orai, Kalpi five each. Next he deduced standard rates and standard rent rolls. Standard rates were drawn by classifying the soils from the cultivating holdings, therein of tenants " paying cash rents according to the attested rent rolls , modified in some instances to meet the particular circumstances of the class.(52) The great basis of the revision was the village rent roll. These measures were aimed at minimising fraud, but there was not much success. The settlement was imposed with much rigour although some efforts were made to bring unclaimed waste land under cultivation, it was unsuccessful. The Government was particular that 'sir' land was not be treated with leniency. A total of 8,947 acres was added to 'sir' lands making it a total of 94,071 acre, which was a 21.6% increase at a rate of Rs. 4-0-8 per acre rental 16,242 acres and, all the rest for Rs. 2-12-0 per acre.(53) This was most unfair and harsh as in the distribution of the village jama after the revenue engagement, the individual 'sir' holding had to be followed in the 'pattis' too.(54) In the Mahals the old revenue had been enhanced too. Regarding the revenue the tract in the Jalaun area, a 12% cess had been imposed on all liable revenue free lands.

Below are the comparative figures for the revenue

settlement.(56)

Real Revenue of last settlement	Rs. 6,19,979
Real Revenue of last year of last settlement	Rs. 6,28,474
Real improve in course of settlement	Rs. 8,494
New Khalsa Revenue of present Settlement	Rs. 7,40,338
Total new Revenue (Real)	Rs. 7,54,229
Total Real Revenue	Rs. 1,25,753

Further, barring the rabi and kharif productions of each village for the past six years, he percentaged them, struck the average for each harvest.(57) These revised kistbandis were sanctioned by the Board of Revenue and put into execution with the new assessment.

As in the case of other districts, settlement were instituted with the optimum extraction in view. There was considerable difficulty in realizing the government demand and that in certain villages the cultivated area progressively shrank from year to year. No genuine effort was made to enquire as to why the settlements broke down. No consideration was paid to the vagaries of weather and the quality of land.

In the land holdings, two equal shareholders found themselves laddered with different quotas of the jama and the party whose quota was larger was excused in case he was not able to pay up. It was also possible in the course of the settlement, the shareholders on the lighter quota were 'bought' by the village 'banker' when all the efforts of the government was wasted on trying to recover the dues. The heart burning of the other co-sharers, more heavily saddled, was greatly intensified. The 'banker' assumed 'pseudo-ownership' and enjoyed the fruits of the

assessment. This paved the way for the money lending class to gain a foothold and exploit the situation to their advantage. In the sale of mortgage deeds he expressly abandoned his share and admitted his inability to full rent. It is therefore undesirable that this new feature in the ditribution of revenue throughout co-parency tenures. Thus making it positive that in the succeeding settlements the sub-tenant would definetly cease to exist, which is exactly what happened. It was only later when the government realised that there was no decline in population (1881-1891) 5.2% (58) that they contemplated it was not advisable to impose the settlement with vigour.

To add to this, the district had suffered three bad harvests and in 1890, there was much difference in the collection. It was brought to the notice that though there had been no sales for arrears, no less than 15% of the area had changed hands by private alienation during the twenty years of the old settlement. White had increased the revenue by 20%. The figures for white were Rs. 7,54,229 and that of the expiring settlement was Rs. 6,28,474; A difference of Rs. 1,25,755 which constituted the increase.(59)

Considering the volatile situation in the district, a relief was ordered in 1892 when a small reduction was made and again in 1894 a further reduction.(60) The pressure of land revenue was attributed to both the heavy assessments and due to the unfavourable seasons which produced agricultural depressions. There were no resources on reserve to back the cultivators. This resulted in revenue accumulation of arrears.

It is a sore fact that White's settlement pressed very heavily on the district and although the rent rates on which the assessments were framed were fair enough in themselves with regard to the quality of the soil, they were higher than had hitherto been paid.

The earlier settlements were essentially brief and summary and were carried out by political officers incharge of the districts, who had scanty knowledge of revenue affairs. Had there been fixed assessments, cultivation would have rapidly increased and revenue would have simultaneously enhanced but to the contrary, the assessment pressed heavily in some quarters and summary reductions were made.

The long term deterioration of the province had set in. The successive enhancements were unevenly distributed. It fell with great severity on paragana Orai which had been raised by 28.20%. Within these parganas the burden fell mainly on a particular class of villages namely those with good mar soil. In the two years following 1890, there were good harvests, but arrears continued to accumulate. Eventually the district was reported to be in "a condition of progressive decay". This culminated in the famine of 1896-97 when the whole settlement broke down and a revision was ordered in 1903.

In conclusion one may say that in view of the temporary revenue settlements, which were subject to revision, after a period of twenty to thirty years the government reserved the right to participate in the increase of rents arising from any

expansion or improvement in the productivity of land. Thereby depriving the real cultivator of any scope of betterment and at the same time exploiting his labour for the benefit of the government.

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## Chapter 6

### REVISION AND FINAL SETTLEMENT OF BUNDELKHAND DISTRICTS.

The preceding chapters have brought to light that the causes for the economic depredation of Bundelkhand was due primarily to the fiscal policies of the British. The ruin was becoming so total that if a revision of the policies had not been made at this juncture the region would have been totally devoid of agriculture which was undoubtedly the backbone of British India. Other factors like the character of the people, the soil (will be discussed at a later stage) had made the situation more complex. The holdings of the Bundelkhand people were small and specially liable to seasonal calamities. More than any other district it was interlaced with territories of native states. A vital factor for agricultural prosperity is irrigation which Bundelkhand was devoid of. Further, the artificial tanks had also disappeared impeding the development of the district.

Neither in Jhansi or in Lalitpur had more than half of the sanctioned term of settlement run, when a revision of the demand was deemed necessary. The situation in the post 1896-97 years was bad for the entire region. In the light of this, the settlements made during the period were not conducive to the alleviation of the condition of the people. Though the settlements were intended to distribute the burden of revenue in accordance with the capacity of landowners to bear it, the era was one of great depression.(1) A large number of mahals had to be settled on low revenue for a short term simultaneously. The

period from 1900-1901 or 1903-04 were slightly better but again in 1904-05 crops were destroyed.(2)

The question of introducing some system of fluctuating assessment into Bundelkhand, an idea which had been mooted earlier, was to be adopted.(3) The cardinal features of the system were that all cultivable land was to be distinguished as established or fluctuating.(4) All fallow area and their rents were to be excluded from the assets, and that only the former should be valued for settlement purposes at the full rates.(5) The latter which included all land which by local custom paid nominal rates and no rents at all.(6) Land which of late had been taken in for cultivation from waste was to be valued at low rates and the amount added to the assets as 'Sewai' and that the assessment fixed were to be liable for quinquennial revision. According to the increase or decrease of cultivation at revenue rates fixed by the settlement officer on both classes of land.(7)

#### **Jhansi Revision by Pim 1903.**

The last revision of the Jhansi district inclusive of Lalitpur (merged into Jhansi in 1891) was based on the papers of 1902-03 (1310 fasli) in Jhansi and 1903-04 in Lalitpur.(8) The object and aim of the last revision was to initiate some relief in the district which was reeling under the deterioration following a series of bad seasons. However, the government of India was anxious that the new system of "fluctuating assessment" for Bundelkhand was to be introduced without delay.(9) The aim was to revise and fix the total revision for the whole district at

The settlement was forced, and the proprietors were left with hardly any choice but to accept the new 'term' by which revenue demand was periodically adjusted to the extent and nature of the cultivation. But 1891 and 1901, witnessed a considerable fall in population, a decline in crop production and a decrease from superior to inferior crops due to weakened resources of the people.(11)

The last settlement of Jhansi proper (1889-92) was undertaken by Impey and Meston. The period of settlement was followed by calamities. Crops suffered from vagaries of weather resulting in the constant demand for reduction of revenue periodically.

Pim's 'revision' assessment was based on the soil classification of the previous settlement, that is, what had been instituted by Impey and Meston, was continued, with slight modification to combine those in order to bring soil classification into line with the rest of the district.(12) The black soil areas were assessed under the existing principles, but these assessments were not applicable to the red soil areas. Owing to different methods of soil classification adopted by Impey in Jhansi and Hoare in Lalitpur, application of this principle differed in both areas.(13) In Jhansi "har" was classified as "rakar pati" and in Lalitpur it was sub-divided into two sorts of 'dumat and patri'. In both however, revenue fixed had been distributed over the 'tareta and har' areas,

separate rates were fixed for future application and subsequent revision.(14) Just as under the ordinary rules, separate rates were fixed for established and 'nautor'. By this method the large fluctuations which occurred in the precarious cultivation of 'har' and was allowed for suitable low rate.(15) Separate rules were fixed for future on the red and black soil areas. Holdings on 'Khalsa, Hakdari' etc. came under the ordinary rules.(16)

Pim had undertaken the revision with a view to revise the rent rates and assessment of the 2nd settlement and fix rates for future use in the quinquennial revisions. He revised the procedure on the treatment of rents.(17) Occupancy rents were incapable of enhancement and there were few inflated rentals. So far as cash rented land was concerned, cash rents had to be derived rates for the valuation of non-cash rented land and it was necessary therefore to determine the area on which the rents were assumed to be payable. In Jhansi the assumed area was taken to be cultivated in cash holdings plus a very small area of the fallow. In Lalitpur it was the holding area after the exclusion of the 'Naugir' rent free land.(18)

The general method of the formation of circle rates did not differ much from that followed at the last settlement. The circle rates adopted were then such as to give on the assumed areas in valuation nearly the same as the total recorded rent and they seem to have been applied only to the cultivated portion of the assumption area.(19) No deductions were made for fallow land in the holdings of tenants, for it was regarded as potential

asset. Secondly, in Jhansi no distinction was made between new and established cultivation. Pim's revenue was 25.07% lower than the revenue assessment at the last settlement. (20)

The question raised is that, why with an increase in cultivation, no apparent fall in rates occurred. In fact there should have been a larger decrease in the revenue and to state as far as possible how much of the decrease was due to an actual loss of assets and how much to difference in the method of assessments.

Remission were made but they did not improve the situation in the district. There were several flaws in the revision which was carried out. Consequently, suggestions were made to introduce the system followed in Ajmer, but it was not accepted on grounds of it not being applicable for a district with a very small percentage of the area under irrigation and a large portion of the total cultivation in the hands of tenants. It also failed in not providing any method of giving relief to tenants as was laid down in the rates for the suspension and remission of revenue.

The system to be introduced was that the revenue would be adjusted every five years, whenever there was a rise or fall exceeding 10% in the area of established cultivation or if necessary at intermediate periods in case of a fall of over 15%. (21)

By established cultivation is meant, the land which had been in continuous cultivation for three years, with a break of

one year. This theory was abandoned for this region as the tract was precarious, so that the deficiency of bad years could be made up for by the surpluses of good years and that it was possible to fix a nominal revenue disregarding fluctuations of cultivation over a very long period. The scanty resources of peasant proprietors who were predominant in this part of the country were unequal to the strain of a prolonged depression in agriculture and it was necessary not only to allow prompt remission in case of crop failure, but also to adjust the new revenue to the reduced area of cultivation resulting from famine or from spread of 'Kans' an obnoxious weed, which destroyed crops and land.(22)

The rules framed to carry out this principle were favourable to zamindars by separating new cultivation from that which had been established and by fixing low rates for the former agreeing with the rental customs of the average black soil villages. Consequently, agricultural production dropped and migrations began. It is to be said that the future prosperity of the district depended on the proper working of remission rules, rather than on changes in the system of settlement.

### **Lalitpur**

Lalitpur had undergone three summary settlements which had been uneven. In villages which were prosperous and held by landlords and zamindars the assessment was light and in Thakur villages unduly heavy with the view to penalise all who opposed and caused trouble for the British.(23) The real demand for Lalitpur sub-division stood at Rs. 1,50,618 and the new one

was Rs. 1,62,914. This increase necessitated good crop, but Lalitpur was recovering from the devastating effects of the famine. Consequently it was not able to pay the increase. (24)

To sum up one may say that the Jhansi settlements were a rather dismal one. The first regular settlement was completed in 1864 and was carried out at a time when proprietors were heavily in debt. To make matters worse it was followed by the famine of 1869, cattle disease of 1872, an out break of Kans. Measures had consequently to be taken to relieve the widespread distress resulting in the passing of the Jhansi Encumbered Estates Act of 1882 and followed by remission in revenues.

The settlement of Impey and Meston was followed by a succession of calamities and necessitated the appointment of an officer to revise the settlements. Pim had undertaken the revision in 1903, in view of the series deterioration which had set in the tract. He proposed the introduction of the new system of quinquennial assessment.

During the last forty years of the late 19thC all competent observers of the condition in Bundelkhand were perturbed by the abject poverty of the cultivator, the total ruination of the agriculture and the progressive decline in culturable land together with migration, divesting the region of all conditions conducive to the economic prosperity of Bundelkhand. These settlements were handicapped in the beginning by the famine of 1869 and widespread distress followed almost immediately after their imposition arising from the mutiny

period. To add to this was the demand by the British authorities for the jamas.

Seasonal calamities were disregarded and the strictness with which the demand was collected in years of agricultural disaster could not but have had a most unfavourable effect. The decrease in assets in both Jhansi and Lalitpur was due to the rental system, the result of which was that the cash rental and consequently the valuation of the assumption areas was proportioned more nearly to the deteriorated condition from which the district was recovering, than to the state of cultivation existing when the statistics which were compiled to provide the basis of Pim's revision.

There were differences in the methods of assessments, but they were not confined to differences due to the introduction of the fluctuating system. Of the total area, 11.92% changed hands during the period of ten years, without counting the numerous mortgages, and transfers which had mostly taken place in villages. Black soil villages had suffered most from the misfortunes of this period.(25)

Increasing indebtedness following the fatal gift of proprietary rights caused confusion. This led to subsequent action in civil courts and in debt suits. The indebtedness was somewhat remedied by the Jhansi Encumbered Estates Act of 1892. But this did little in way of stopping land changing hands.

In conclusion one may say that the short term modifications of revenue demand were necessary, as immediate and

liberal relief was not given on calamity. The future prosperity was impeded, as the proper working of remission rules was necessary, than on any changes in the system of settlement. As has been reiterated the rigidity with which the revenue was demanded undermined the strength on which the British based their economic structure. Consequently, the repercussions were to follow.

### **3rd and Last Settlement of Jhansi District Lane**

The third and last regular settlement of Jhansi district was started by J.B. Langford who was appointed settlement officer in September, 1939. He was assisted by H.T. Lane. Though at the time of the 19thC , it was not due for a re-settlement, but other Bundelkhand districts were and it was in considering proposals for a new Jalaun settlement that a change in settlement policy was first contemplated.(27) On going through the records it is difficult to find how the idea of fluctuating assessments first arose but it seems to have been assumed from the beginning that circumstances of cultivation in Bundelkhand resembled those of cultivation in alluvial mahals and that therefore a fundamentally similar settlement policy was required.

The formation of assessment circles was based solely on quality and topography. The unit of inspection for the framing of assessment was the tahsil, in the preceding settlement it was the paragana. Rent modifications had been carried out in different ways and in different groups of tahsils owing to the amendments of the Land Revenue Act, which was made Law during the

period of settlement. At the time of assessment of tahsils, Lalitpur and Mehroni, certain section of the Land Revenue Act were amended - the recognition of rental privilege was abolished and the potential enhancement in rents of hereditary tenants was allowed to be accepted in assets. Enhancement was limited to 50% above remitted rent, since it was considered that this might in a poor tract operate harshly on both tenants and landlords. The condition was that the remitted rent should not have been less than half the valuation, if it was less than half; then half valuation or recorded rent was taken. (29)

The large difference between the area assessed and the area cultivated and new fallow in the year of record was mostly due to the large area of shifting cultivation particularly in red soil circle. The Land Revenue Act 63-L (2) ordered a separate assessment of assets for new cultivation. To consider the area assessed by Pim as the criterion for separate assessment of extension was unnecessary when enhanced revenue had already been assessed at various quinquennial revision, and had actually been paid. (30) The total revenue assigned and revenue free area was 8.2% of the total area of the district.

The defect lay in the assumption that instability and serious fluctuations in cultivation was a permanent feature of these districts and the during the thirty years for which rent and revenue rates prospered, no change in conditions could be made to effect modifications of the scheme. The scheme was based on the assessment strictly on the cultivated area in the year the assessment was originally made or subsequently revised. All

cultivation was classed as "established or nautor", the latter comprising all land which had been continuously cultivated for less than four years. On the basis of the original assessment<sup>ss</sup> separate revenue rates for the future for "established and nautor" cultivation were fixed and were applied when revenue was revised. Variations in the area of established cultivation determined whether the revenue should have ~~be~~ been revised after each quinquennium.

Further the impossibility of determining a 'normal area' for assessment the danger of assessment on any average figure which might differ widely from that of any particular year was emphasized. The ~~settlement~~ <sup>resultant</sup> difficulty to proprietors of paying such a 'normal' demand in bad years and its effect in the already <sup>u</sup> series debt situation has been pointed out earlier.

In view of the circumstances, that fluctuations in cultivation with seasonal vicissitudes, was the most distinctive feature of the Bundelkhand district and the failure of the system of settlement to cope with the difficulties which resulted from thereof. Consequently the 'fixed' demand was done away with, and the five yearly one introduced but that too didn't prove successful. The defects of the system become apparent with the steady recovery and the return of normal conditions. By 'normal' conditions was meant a state where the cultivated area had reached a point at which it could be steadily maintained effort in normal seasons. This penalised the development in a manner contrary to accepted principles of revenue policy. The poor Bundelkhand proprietor was in fact from this point at a

disadvantage as compared with other fellows in other parts of the country.

Over the period between 1900-1920 the government too suffered from its own follies and strictures to adhere to its own rules. e.g. in case a year of quinquennial revisions coincided with a single one of abnormally low cultivation. Reduction in revenue was involved for the next five years in four of which cultivation may well have been up to normal standard. Consequently, it led to the postponement of quinquennial revisions on the ground that the cultivated area of a particular district was low and the revenue would be unfair to the government. Yet these rules were devised to deal with abnormal conditions prevailing in Bundelkhand and the fact that it was necessary to modify the system, was a condition which had developed since they were first introduced.

Further, these rules failed to take into account abnormally low cultivation and in taking action under the rules for remission on account of seasonal calamities. In effect such remissions were inadequate and subsequent recovery of the cultivated area prevented any relief at succeeding quinquennial revisions. This had an impact on the tenant who got inadequate relief in rent and this lead to the second point that a revenue reduction at a quinquennial revision was accompanied by no formal relief to tenants. As to this it was asserted that at the time when the rules were introduced that whatever may have been the rent recorded it was actually levied only on the area cultivated, though even this was qualified by the remark that

this was "false if the full rent was low".

As the settlement continued it impeded the natural development of the tract and did not afford relief to established tenants when revenue was reduced. Lastly, during the last forty years of the 19thC, a new factor had arisen in Bundelkhand and that was the gift of 'proprietary rights', to the land holders. Under Maratha rule the landlord had no saleable interest in land and when this right was suddenly conferred upon them by the British Government, there was no immediate spate of decrees for sale which was increase by the exceedingly poor and distressed condition of the proprietors and was aggravated by several famines.

The Jhansi Encumbered Estates Act 1892, gave some relief but did not go far enough to prevent alienation of land. The job was finally accomplished by the Bundelkhand Land Alienation Act of 1903 which prohibited alienation of land by agricultural class except with the collector's sanction. The figures of sale by private negotiations showed an increase and decrease during the first half of the inter-settlement period. This was attributed to the fact of land changing hands from one agriculturist to another or from one non-agriculturist to another.

Consequently, progress was hampered and Jhansi continued to be in a state of despair when independence came. Agriculture was in a state of neglect, land in the hands of non-agricultural capitalists and there was utter ruin and neglect.

The object of the revision of settlement in Hamirpur district was to redress the inequalities of the demand and to introduce the new system of fluctuating assessment by which the revenue demand was periodically adjusted to the extent and character of cultivation.(31) The break down of a settlement was inevitable, however lenient, with the approaching of rigid collection.

In the settlement of Neale, the valuation accepted exceeded the actual known assets, and that it followed too closely the preceding demand, without regard to the fact that the former settlement was based on the principle of 2/3rd of the assets.(32) The rules which were in force allowed the assessing officer wide latitude in determining the assets and it was not until some time later that the practise was adopted of basing the assessment not on the assets which the settlement officer believed could with fair management be realized, but on the actual known rental.(33) Moreover, it was an accepted procedure to retain or raise assessments without any minute regard to arithmetical estimates of rent rolls.

Raw, was of the opinion that to redress the inequalities of the demand and to introduce the fluctuating system of settlement for future use. The circle into which villages and each paragona were grouped at the last settlement were too large and included blocks of villages to which the same set of rates could not fittingly be applied.(34) For purposes of assessment

the district was divided into twenty four circles formed on the basis of soil characteristics. In these estates the revised settlement was imposed for thirty years. The work of finalisation of rates was greatly simplified by large proportion of field rents which were adopted by the settlement officer as the basis of his circle rates for land in established cultivation. The resultant valuation of land in established cultivation differed little from the aggregate rental demand of the land in each paragana.(35) The circle rates fixed were based on the recorded rents of single fields. The accepted valuation of the established cultivated area was only .5% less than that arrived at, by the application of circle rates. The net assessable assets of the district was placed at Rs. 17,79,469. The revenue assessed was Rs. 8,43,888 or 47.42% as compared with Rs. 10,67,821. The new demand was 20% lower than of the previous settlement. (36) The Jama of a mahal was liable to revision every five years if there was an increase or decrease of 10% in the area under established cultivation, and to reduction if there was a decrease of 15%. (37) Just 2/3rds of the established cultivation or a somewhat smaller portion of the nautor was let at field rents. The percentage varied from 55% to 85% in various parts of the district. (Under the special rules for Bundelkhand settlements, all land which had not been under cultivation for four years with not more than one year break was called nautor). The remaining third was let at lump rates locally known as "thansas". The custom of allowing a deduction called "Chhut" from recorded rates was continued. (38) Though the rental system was a simple one, the proportion of land let at known rates was high. In no paragana was the burden

of revenue evenly distributed. Furthermore, it did not remove the inequalities of the settlement which became uneven in its course. The cultivated area of the different paraganas in the years of record totalled 7,35,758 acres. The seasons from 1282 fasli to 1284 fasli were favourable. The following two years were dry. In 1288 fasli a severe drought curtailed cultivation in the north of the district which suffered most.

Inspite of reductions (for five years) there was a considerable increase in mortgages resulting in great loss. Large portions of the district were of constant anxiety to the state authorities. The district exhibited all the signs of severe depressions. Heavy arrears of revenue accrued with decline in agriculture. Raw's settlement tried to contend with a series of measures undertaken to ameliorate the condition of the district. Legislative measures were designed to relieve the chronic indebtedness into which the agricultural communities had fallen as a result of a succession of bad seasons. Previous settlements had been rigid for want of elasticity and adaptability to the fluctuating conditions of the area. The 'final demand' had to be abandoned and the system of fluctuating demands was introduced.

In the economic history of Hamirpur, it is seen that it was not given a chance to improve like Jalaun and it did not enjoy the same degree of prosperity which was once the lot of the district. Till independence, the district remained in much the same way.

In conclusion it may be said that the connection between

the severity of the assessment and the subsequent history of different villages was due to the fact that the more percentage of assets taken, was only one and not the most important of many factors which made for the adversity or prosperity of the Bundelkhand village.

Jalaun Hailey 1906

The third regular settlement saw no significant change in the economic condition of the district which had been reduced to the condition as other parts of the district. The decline in the prosperity was reflected in the assessment of the land revenue at different periods. The revenue administration had run into several problems. Adverse factors had been detrimental to the prosperity and the parameters of progress were a distant dream for the cultivators and landowners of Bundelkhand who were deprived of their natural habitat. Jalaun was regarded as the garden of Bundelkhand and the prosperity depended on the flourishing trade in that area.(39) However the growth of Kanpur drew off the trade from Kalpi and Koonch. While most of the provinces were comparatively improving, the condition of Jalaun was deteriorating. On the contrary, in the Doab area, canal irrigation had been helpful in introducing new valuable crops such as sugarcane and poppy while Jalaun was content with wheat and gram.

The most important reason was that initially a district which had started with an inflated revenue was prima facie likely to be highly assessed in first place because each settlement was

largely based on the former.

Further, an exaggerated view was taken of Jalaun's capacities. The revenue of Jalaun had thus remained at a high pitch and consequently it had necessitated heavy reductions in 1901 settlement. The imposition of a moderate demand spread over good and bad seasons was unsuitable and it was not feasible to meet with regularity this kind of demand.(40) The earlier methods of assessments were defected and a factor of considerable importance was that a period of deterioration had set in and this was not being accepted by the authorities and any fall in cultivation was put down as deliberate concealment. Great stress was laid on the rules and strict adherence to them was necessitated. Hence White in his assessment was led to value the assumption areas by the incidence of non-occupancy rents. Cultivation had steadily declined and in 1899-1900 period, the lowest point was reached in a cultivated area of 4,99,284 acres.(41) The district was reduced to a "condition of progressive decay," accompanied by fall in population between 1881-1900. Though the authorities had tried to check the situation by introducing reduction and change the methods of assessment but it did not much change the situation.

Hailey, in reviewing the whole district, surveyed it, excluding feudatory states. A difficulty arose with regard to the abandoned land or land which had been taken in possession by resident proprietors. When the revenue was reduced the original proprietors returned and claimed the land, which the person in possession was unusually most unwilling to surrender.(42)

Consequently, he did away with the fixed assessment for the whole term of settlement and introduced a system where in the demand was adjusted from time to time in the areas under cultivation.(43) The adaption of this principle changed the whole character of the settlement officer's work.

It was in this district that the Punjab plan of Khasra measurement by Patwaris was first attempted. It was here that the rules were first evolved which insisted on the necessity of basing assessments as far as possible in actual rent rolls and it was in this connection with the settlement of Jalaun that considerable departure from previous practice had been sanctioned which eventually found its place in the special rules for assessment in Bundelkhand.(44)

The first step as in other settlements, assessments were done on the classification of soil. The second was to divide the paragana into circle or groups of villages possessing a similarity of soils and natural conditions to which the scale of rates could be fairly applied.(45) The framing of circles simplified the work as field rents were taken into account instead of lump. The rent of the field was largely determined by the bigha - rates for each class of soil. This led to certain anomalies, as competition for land rose as no occupancy rents rose simultaneously if conditions were favourable. On the other hand, with an essentially non-proprietary group, the occupancy rents were relatively unprogressive. Also in the irrigated areas the occupancy rents failed to disclose the rise in the value of lands.(46) But these measures failed to arrest the steady

decline for numerous reasons.

Firstly, because of over assessment the application of non-occupancy tenant rate to the unrented areas regardless they represented a fair valuation of the land and whether they were not merely rent exacted from special tenants for special areas and the inadequate allowance for proprietary cultivation. Secondly rents too were accepted without examination as to whether they were realisable or not. Moreover, the Board had directed that the rate to be applied was to be the non-occupancy rate in joint occupancy areas.(47) Thirdly, the method of assessment had exposed the weakness of the system in that, such a system was unsuitable in such a tract held by peasant proprietors with no capital. The extension of cultivation should have taken on the poorer land and also on the fallow land since the last settlement. The faulty methods of assessment was one of the primary causes of the failure of the assessments. The larger the proprietary body, the less land left for tenants and the higher the rent demanded hence the poorer the community and worse the district fared. The settlement officer acted on the impression which had formed that the shrinkage of the assets who due not so much to natural causes but the desire of the proprietors to obtain a lenient assessment. The land revenue fixed, however suitable to a tract of ordinary conditions, proved to heavy for a district which was held by bodies of poor proprietors and subject to usual agricultural vicissitudes. Added to this was the factor of nature of the soils, the scantiness of the population with the result that the non-resident threw up his holding and

the resident abandoned his inferior fields. With resources depleted the proprietors could neither assist the tenant nor maintain his own cultivation. Proprietors were forced to resort to money lenders and alienations and mortgages increased over 36% of the total area changing hands between 1886 and 1902. The Marwaris had ousted the old proprietors and were unable to find cultivators for the land. The community invested in land as a profitable source of return in future. The neglected the vital issue of agricultural development for which the land had originally been designated. Consequently, agricultural land diminished causing grave damages in the future years as will be seen subsequently.

Fourthly, the provisions in the Bundelkhand settlements were favourable for the zamindars, the pro-British class. By the first of the rules of the provisions. The fallow areas were to be excused from the holding and the assessment was based on cultivated land only. By the other the 'nautor' was to be separated from the 'mustakil' with a view to the former being assessed at low rates for a term of years. Under the latter provision, not only were the zamindars assessed at easy rates on the new cultivation until the settlement was revised, but for part of this period he would be recovering full rents from the tenants for land assessed at the lower or nautor rates. Thus taking advantage of the situation, the zamindars consolidated their position.

Jalaun was in no way different from other districts of Bundelkhand. It is tragic that an opulent state was reduced to

object deterioration resulting in untoward depression. This was the condition of the district when India became independent.

**Banda**

E. de Humphries 1909

The Banda district formed a distinctive part of Bundelkhand for its features which necessitated the application of special methods of settlement. Not only had the district hitherto been subject to great vagaries of weather, peculiar qualities of the soil and the absence of protection from drought. As in the case of other settlements of Bundelkhand the earlier ones had proved a failure. Cadell in his settlement of 1874-75 had tried to rectify by assessing a 'normal' standard of cultivation based on the hypothesis that the best lands would most probably remain longest under cultivation and that fluctuation would be most marked in the poorer soils. But this attempt of Cadell was not quite a success. There was a fall in cultivation from 9,16,807 acres to 6,44,255 acres or an estimate of 37.15% less than from 1290 fasli.(48) But the government was of the opinion that the assessment was to continue and the fixed rent rates and rents between landlords and tenants was to be continued.

In 1903, a revision was ordered as calamities had occurred, resulting in the large accrument of arrears.(49) Humphries was appointed to conduct a revision of settlement, the last in the district.

The system of assessment was based exclusively on the

cultivated area of the year of verification and the rental which was or would be payable in respect of the fallow included in the holding was however excluded. A distinction was drawn between land under established cultivation and nautor.(50) The revenue so assessed was liable for change at intervals of five years according to the quinquennial settlement introduced in Bundelkhand districts. There was an advantageous point in that the system marked the abandonment of the theory that the loss in bad years could be compensated from the profits of good seasons. The new demand was fixed at 17.3% lower than that fixed thirty years earlier. The same principle dividing the district into circles was adopted, the valuation of the established cultivated area arrived at by the appreciation of cirlice rates closely followed the recorded rental.(51) In the preceeding settlements the classification of soils and circles was over-elabvorate and if any rectification was essential it was for a less complicated system. The standard was defective and in particular that it was too high for the darker soils and too lower for the better parua, while it failed altogether to take into consideration the resources of individual villages in population or agricultural stock.

#### Karwi

In case of Karwi there was no systematic attempt to frame any standard of cultivation in case of individual villages and no systematic revenue of rents as in Banda. The aim of this short term revision was to introduce some system of assessment more suited to the tract. In the Karwi sub-division

the physical configuration of the district tended itself to the formation of compact circles with distinctive natural features(52) However, it was often seen that villages contiguous to one circle bore a close affinity to those of distant circle than to that in which their position necessitated their inclusion. In such cases, however, the rates were modified suitable at assessment, and as soils blended into one another gradually, while rent rates were affected by those prevailing in neighbouring villages it was held that on the whole, the balance of advantage lay in the classing of them according to their position.(53) But in the absence of co-related information, it was not possible to form suitable rates. The new revenue fell shortby 15.5%. As there was no general system of remission in the district, the villages were mis-managed by reckless and incompetent capitalists who rose because of British leniency.

A study of the British Revenue Settlement in Bundelkhand had revealed that the pressure of revenue had become intolerable, especially in the black soil tracts. Reducution were minimal and there was no concerted action to alleviate the economic condition of the people. The experience of past settlements had made it clear that it was not possible to form an assessment for a long term of year which should not have been oppressive at one time and inadequate at another.

The settlement officer had to base his assessment in the actual assets of a village, in the year of verification without being compelled to have recourse to the assumptions as they were fallacious. On this unassailable basis of ascertained facts he

could frame suitable assessments in full confidence and that whether the fortunes of the district would advance or recede, the revenue would be adjusted to the altered conditions while a sympathetic and vigilant revenue administration would prevent their otherwise inevitable failure in unfavourable seasons.

Much has been said about the inherent failures of the various settlements and the impact it had on the district. The far reaching effects had begun to surface in the form of property alienations, rise of a capitalist class, deterioration of agriculture and above all the rise of compulsive crime and dacoity. Landless cultivator sought to ameliorate their poverty by either seeking employment by migrating or indulging in thefts.

Bundelkhand was left in an abject, backward condition. Other parts of the country had a comparatively moderate economically stable situation whereas this part was the subject of economic devastation.

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48. E. de Humpliés Esq. Final Report on the Revision of Settlement of the Banda district. Allahabad : Govt. Press, United Provs. 1909. p. 18.

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## REVENUE RATES, PROPRIETARY RIGHTS AND TENURES

In this chapter an attempt has been made to analyse the revenue rates imposed in the district under the settlements of the various settlement officers. Added to this topic is the question of proprietary rights which was a sensitive subject. This was a complex question as to who was the real owner and the prerogatives he enjoyed. The various tenures which existed in the district was a variegated one with no one system prominent. The great multifarious tenures, disturbed by the new system of administration shook the age old systems prevalent and thereby causing disturbances in the social, economic and sentimental order of the simple people.

### Revenue Rates

Land revenue was a form of public income derived from time immemorial from the law and custom of the country. In its primary form it represented the portion of the cultivators grain heap retained by the state for public use.(1) In the 16thC the plan of taking the share of the state direct from the grain heap was abandoned and cash rates were substituted for payments in kind, the cash rates being fixed for a period of years instead of being subject to alterations annually.(2) During the period of Mughal supremacy, these cash payments were realised direct from the cultivators (3)

Owing to the destruction of records, the earlier

calculations for estimating revenue rates has not been feasible. It appears that the early settlement officers seemed to have employed produce rates, at which they arrived by calculating the average produce and cost of cultivation and the profit in each class of soil.(4) These rates were compared with the actual rates found in adjoining districts of Bundelkhand.(5) Similar villages were grouped together in circles and from the average rates obtained separate rent rates for each village was established.(6)

The local practice was to pay rent in cash at so much a bigha according to the crop sown and not according to the soil.(7) Ascertaining the system of rotation and the actual area of each class of soil under each crop and estimating the average produce and net profits of that crop the assessing officer translated the crop rates of each village in soil rates.(8) They then divided the villages according to their capacities and advantages into these classes and drew out the average rates for each land of soil in each class of village in each paragana.(9)

The average soil were worked out lay taking into consideration the value of the produce, deducting the expenses of cultivation and assuming the half of the resultant as rent. From the existing rent rates in the soils, 1/3rd was subtracted to form the revenue rates.(10) The assumed aggregate rates for each class of soil was based on the area of cultivation in the district, recorded at the time of settlement, by combining the various rates proposed for such soil in each paragana.(11)

Variations depended on custom, certain rates were customary for certain soil rates in one part of a district and lower or higher rates for about the same in another part of district. Even though the soil may have been the same the people adhered to the existing custom. Classification was most inaccurate as it was formed rather on the relative profitableness of the villages rather than on the relative goodness of their soils.

As mentioned earlier, the documents pertaining to the revenue settlement in the paraganas Moth, Gurotha and Bhandar have been destroyed. There is a note of Gordon which states that he had based his calculation on the 'produce Rate Theory' i.e. the rate of revenue in the neighbouring districts was ascertained and then he worked out the average rent rates for each kind of soil.(12) This note bears testimony to the fact as to how he deduced the revenue rate on the mar soil for Moth tehsil. The text is reproduced below:-

"Thirty seven seers of wheat are required to sow one acre of mar, the outturn is 247 seers and the average price of wheat for 12 years was 25 seers per rupee, therefore the gross outturn was worth Rs. 9-9-7. Deduct for seed Rs. 1-7-8. Interest Rs. 0-6-0 and food, labour etc. Rs. 3-3-11. The balance Rs. 3-3-11 represents the rental assets, of which one half is taken as Government revenue".(13) Other paraganas were assessed by other assessment officers, viz, Mau and Pandwaha by Daniell, Jhansi by Davidson. They used the soil rates. Daniell used the nominal

rates which were prevalent and then he fixed soil rates for each village after taking into consideration the nature of soil.(14) Subsequent officers like Davidson calculated rent rates on the average ascertained soil rates of each class, He calculated the rent rates for the villages which had good mar and kabar soil an average ascertained soil rates of each class. Those which had poor soil, rates were fixed on a lower rate then the mar villages.(15)

Impey and Meston at the time of the 2nd settlement based their assessment on the classification of soil and therefore villages were classified on natural soil tract. The reason for forming such circles was perhaps to group together villages to which a uniform set of rates could be applied.(16) For calculating the standard circle rates the actual rents of holdings of uniform soil were the rates prevalent in most villages was taken as the standard rate.(17) As the standard of measurement in the district varied immensely from place to place, a simplified method of calculation of rate per acre was accepted.

In Lalitpur too, the assessment of land revenue was based on the nature of soil and rent was paid in cash according to the class of crop.(18) For the convenience of working, the villages were divided into 3 or 4 classes and then the average rate for each kind of soil in each village was calculated. The revenue differed from place to place depending upon the nature and fertility of the soils.(19)

However, it appears that the application of the rates

earlier was not feasible as the assessment could not be stringently tested by average rates or in which a settlement officer could assume that the same rents paid in villages could be equally paid to either villages for similar land. Several circumstances prevented this among which was the prevalence of large 'Thanka' basis or rents fixed in lump sum generally at a lower total than the crop rates would amount to and the prevalence of 'pahikasht' i.e. of the cultivators holding land in a different village, from that which he inhabited. A custom which arose from the scarcity of cultivation and indicative of want of permanence in the habits and tenures of the country. (20)

Based on topographical divisions, Hoare grouped the villages into circles at the 2nd regular settlement of Lalitpur. However, there was no change in the classification of soil. Hoare divided the villages into 3 categories. (21)

- (a) those which had suffered from semi-permanent deterioration were assessed on the figures of the year of record.
- (b) they were settled summarily for 5 years on the estimated assets of 1897-98. (22)
- (c) those which were normal villages, The assessment was based on the average assets of the years and the full jama was to be executed in 3 years time. (23)

At the time of the final settlement of Jhansi in 1903, Pim introduced the fluctuating assessment which has been described in the last chapter. The need arose to apply this so that the district which had suffered innumerable calamities and a large area had remained out of cultivation. (24) To give relief

to the cultivators and avoid the burden of revenue on them. This remained in force till 1937. However, this suggestion could not be executed, but it brought home to the authorities that it was necessary to distinguish the cultivated land and to exclude the fallow area from the assets. The cultivated land alone was valued at full rate for the purpose of assessment. Fallow land was valued at low rates.(25) Consequently, the revenue was subject to adjustment every five years whenever there was a fall in rent exceeding 10% in the cultivated area or if there was a fall of over 15%. This system remained in force till 1947.(26)

Further, two sets of rates were calculated for the areas which were rented on the 'thanka' lump rent system. Of these one was the 'turreta' (irregular land) and the second was the 'har' land. the rental of the established cultivation was arrived at by deducting the valuation of 'har' land from the rent of the whole cultivated area,

Following are some examples to show difference of rates:-

Hamirpur paragana	- mar	-	Rs. 4-12-2	per acre.
Mahoba	"		Rs. 3- 4-0	" "
Bansie			Rs. 0-10-0	" "
Moti soil ranged from			Rs. 2- 8-0	
Doormit			Rs. 2 to 8 annas	
Pathare			Re. 1 to 4 annas.	(27)

Demerits :

Though the rates were calculated and evaluated after investigation and were applied to every village but considering the general economic condition of the district, they were found to be too high in a very large number of cases. In every

paragana, the serious difference between the assumed and ascertained rates couldn't be justified on arithmetical grounds. The difference between the value of deduced revenue rate and the proposed jamas were evident for each village. In equalities in the rental rates of similar kinds of soil too occurred.

The difference between rates whether ascertained or assumed for what was nominally the same soil in different paragans e.g. paragana Banda in ascertained rates varied from Rs. 5-7-11 to Rs. 7-4-5. Further all rates for the same soil had not been uniform in Bundelkhand. The cultivation was not uniformly maintained so that average standards could not be ascertained and an average cultivation was the only base on which rates could be determined.

Rates in inferior lands were sometimes were too high. There was a proposal to base the assessment on standard rates with modifications but these were unsuitable for various soils. Further erratic evaluations of rates led to no uniformity in the various villages. The particular village rates per paragana were applied to the number of bighas given in the records, then from the rental thus obtained a deduction of 40% was made. This calculation would have been more valuable had it been possible in all cases to determine the proportionalbe size of the village and government bigha. There was no standard and in the village except the Government one, certain fields were said to contain a specific number of bighas without reference to any positive measurement for the relative size of the bigha would often differ in the same village and according to the goodness of the soil.

Further, the rates were drawn from Patwaris' records which were not accurate, authentic or reliable. The result of these rates upon the cultivated area furnished a jama. The deduction of 1/3rd from the gross rental produced a high demand which was impractical. The fallacy lay in supposing that these rates produced to the same extent every year but the point to notice was that they would fluctuate every season being subject to the weather though the rates had been reduced in view of seasonable calamities, they provided little or no relief to the cultivator. Again the government tried to appease certain sections of the population to secure their support. e.g. concessions were given to Bundela villages with reputation of notoriety. They were assessed lightly in comparison to the villages of industrious farmers where the assessment was unduly high. This exposes the double standards of the British administration.

To add to the woes of the Bundelkhand cultivator the exaction of revenue was enforced with severity. Concessions were hardly ever made some in cases of 'kans' ravages in famines which devastated the area. On non payment of revenue the lands were mortgaged which left the people with little option but to give up their property, and live a life of abject poverty or take to dacoity in the ravines.

#### **Proprietary Rights**

History of Proprietary rights in Bundelkhand was somewhat complicated but was interesting because it showed how proprietary

rights originated under the revenue system of the British.

Prior to the British rule, under the native rulers there was little or no recognition of proprietorship in land. The villages were maintained by the several communities who occupied them. They were independent but they were binded by the common land of village of partnership. The only right of the cultivating communities was the mere cultivating right which was acknowledged. In some cases, we find that the thakur communities were allowed a quasi proprietorship.

Under the Maratta rule, proprietary right in the soil was held to be vested in the Raj or State. (28) Sale of land was unheard of and in case of mortgage, it was the produce of the land that was mortgaged rather than the land itself. Proprietary rights were only in exceptional cases acknowledged and even when acknowledged they were little respected. The government was the landlord, collecting its rent from the tenant and paying to the headman. (29) It was only the headmen called 'mehtey' who could receive the 'mehut'. (30) It was through him that the management was conducted and rents collected. In return for the service they received either a direct payment in cash or in a 'drawback' or decrease in the rent. (31) The 'haq' mehut or 'haq chakhuri' took shape either of money dole paid in cash or deducted from the rental or of a grant of land and was payable for rendering military service. (32)

Speaking broadly, there was no distinction between revenue and rent - what each man paid for "his land to the

government it was through the headman and not to a superior holder who deducted a portion of it as his due right and looked for its dues". (33) Thus it almost came to be that prosperity would thus have been recognised as closest to imperfect rights and responsibilities. The terms of landed property which were insecure and the demand made by the Native governments was so excessive that the money lender did not cease to obtain possession of the debtors assets. (34) Moreover, there was no fixed period of uninterrupted possession which entitled a man to what was called a right of occupancy prior to British rule. Rents had been fixed after valuation of crops, known as 'Dekha Parkee'.

When the British took over they at first calculated the demand to leave the now recognised landholders merely a sum to recompense him for his services. This mehut allowance and the custom of distributing was on the basis on which proprietary rights in the district steadily developed. (35) Though the state was the sole acknowledged proprietor of the soil, the proprietary title was reserved until the time of the regular settlement.

Under the summary settlements between 1843-44 to 1860-61, the revenue paying estates belonging to Scindhia were all held by farmers or leases where tenures depended solely on the fact of their ability to meet the government demand. They were not recognised as proprietors. Proprietary rights were conferred on the Thakurs and from 1868 on the headman (mehtey) of village communities who were in most cases descendants of the original founders of the village. (36)

Much weight was given to the old cultivators those who owned land. Since 1840 those who owned land were recognised as proprietors of their holdings liable to pay revenue. Old cultivators who failed to establish their right were treated as tenant proprietors so long as they proved that they were in possession of their holding for about twelve years.(37) It has been argued that instead of the proprietorship which developed in Bundelkhand, the one which evolved in southern Mirzapur under which the cultivators were recognised as proprietors of their holding and headmen constituted a "patel" with certain rights of management and perquisites, but with no proprietary powers over the other cultivators, would not have been better suited.(38)

The proprietary body had a very ill-defined idea of what their rights were under the British administration. There were two classes of proprietors -inferior and superior.(39)

- a) Superior were those implying the payment by the inferior of a fixed sum to the latter.
- b) Inferior proprietors were owners of land paying land revenue through the lumberdars of their holdings. They in no respect differed from the owners of resumed revenue free plots. In the absence of a fixed period of uninterrupted possession which entitled a man to what was called a right of occupancy was known, but the "old cultivators" or "poorana jotdar" acquired their rights either as descendants of the men who took lands into cultivation when first the village was founded or they acquired their rights by digging wells etc. The old cultivator could sell

or mortgage. A subordinate tenant or "naia jotdar" could acquire no rights. (40)

Under the head of proprietary rights the old cultivators (Kadeem Kashtgars) who had been recorded as proprietors of their holdings prior to the settlement the hereditary right of cultivators had not been formerly recognised but after the settlement occupancy title had been granted to all who had held continuous possession of their holdings for twelve years. (41) Hereditary tenures which had become stable as occupancy owning to the rights conferred by the United Provinces Tenancy Act. (42)

#### **Proprietary Castes :**

Jhansi : Predomenant castes were the Bundela Thakurs who had lost their position to the Thakurs who held 1/3rd of the area. Brahmans owned 1/5th; Rajputs held 38.56% of the total area. They were the old hereditary rulers. (43) A considerable part was still in the hands of Lodhis, Kurmis and Ahirs. It is to be noted that Bundela Thakurs were inert landlords. Many of them flourished by money lending transaction.

Karwi: In Karwi the Brahmans were the largest proprietary class owning 53% followed by Thakurs owning 11.9%. (44)

Hamirpur: Hamirpur prescribed a different picture with 50% of the tenants area was held with occupancy rights. (45)

Banda : Thakurs and Brahmans were the proprietary classes.

#### **Tenants**

They were those who had never received a share, whether

money or land, in the service allowance, nor had enjoyed privileges such as by village custom would rank them with others who were acknowledged to share holders.(46) Generally tenants were divided into four classes. (47)

- i) holding at privileged rates or paying a low rent in one lump sum called "thansa" or "thanka" on their holdings.(non-occupancy tenants).
- ii) Tenant holding at fixed rates at a fixed lump sum, on their holding and not liable to enhancement. (mouroose tenants). 1864 statistics showed occupancy percentage at 14.01%.
- iii) Tenants holding at village rates or by thansa and liable to enhancement (Ghair mouroose) - 13.6%
- iv) Tenants - at-will (non - occupancy ) were those which included men of many inferior castes. They comprised 30.5% (49)

The comparatively small amount of land held in the tract by occupancy tenants was attributed not any opposition of the proprietor but to the fact that in a district of such uncertainties of season the tenants themselves cared little or nothing about such rights that they constantly threw up their land for bad seasons or 'Kans'.(51)

To add to their woes, the merciless administrative measures of the British and the over-assessment it was found that only 1/4th of the cultivated area was found to be in the hands of cultivating proprietors.(52) A very large proportion of the district was retained by co-parancy communities who not only

cultivated some 29% of the total cultivated area but also a considerable area as tenants in the pattis of other co-sharers. (53)

Generally speaking throughout the whole of Bundelkhand it was not land but tenants who were at a premium. The district was dependent on the cultivating castes to a large extent. The landlords were forced to treat the tenants compassionately and to allow them considerable latituded in the amount of rent they preferred to pay for the first years of the cultivation. (54)

#### Cultivating Castes :

In Karwi the Kayathas, Muslim, Kurmis occupied the cultivating classes. (55) In Banda in addition to the Kurmis there were the Kachhis who occupied less than 3% of the cultivated area. (56) The status of the cultivating body was in this district same as in other parts of Bundelkhand. In Jhansi the Kurmis, Ahirs, Lodhis were small proprietors as well as Jajhariyas. (57)

The conception that the state was the owner of the soil appeared in the expression "ownership of land" In India the meaning was somewhat different from that commonly used elsewhere. Originally, the occupant of the land possessed the right to hold and till it subject of the payment of a part of the produce to government and the government possessed the co-relative right to a share of the produce called "land revenue". This controversy whether the government really owned the land or not has become in a great measure academic. The state reserved the right to have

precedence over all other claims. At each revision of settlement the state asserted its power of refusing to renew the engagement with the land holder in possession. In severe cases it secured the same end by fixing the revenue on a scale which left the cultivator no margin of profit. But this right had practically fallen into abeyance. As a matter of fact the refusal of the government to recognise the holder in possession or to assess a reasonable demand upon him.

The concept of rights of occupancy did create problems for the Bundelkhand cultivators who in simplicity fell prey to unscrupulous money lender in times of economic distress. Had the cultivators a limited tenure in the soil, they would have been unable to sell or mortgage their property and thereby save themselves from ruin.

It was a peculiar feature of this district that so large a quantity of land was held by the proprietors themselves and that there were so many tenant holdings at fixed rates. The position of the tenants too has not been well defined. Under the marattas no distinction had been recognised between landlords and tenants, all were cultivators, paying rents to the states. A form of record of proprietary and tenant rights and the history of the latter was recorded, and men who were recorded as tenants at the settlements of 1866, were of two different kinds. The question of collection of rents, what rents were to be collected by the proprietor and the rents of occupancy tenants was a matter of controversy.

Not only was the north western system of proprietary holdings alien to the customs and instincts of the people, it was introduced on such a manner as to be at variance with the facts of actual possession.

### **Tenures**

All land in British India was held subject to the payment of land revenue to the state unless the state had definitely waived its right to collect such revenue. A description therefore of land tenure relative to the state resolved itself with a description of the person by whom land revenue was paid. Early tenures in Bundelkhand consisted of large villages, which were divided into 'thoks' or 'behris' and it was the 'behriwar' who collected the revenue from his inferior sharers. It is interesting to note that for the good extraction for the government they were rewarded with the title of 'Mukhia'.(58)

Other forms of land tenure are as follows:-

**Pahikasht or Mazkuri** : Amongst the other original forms of tenure the pahikasht system or cultivation by non-resident cultivators prevailed to a large extent throughout the district especially in the Lalitpur area.(59) These cultivators were those who resided in another village and cultivated lands which the inhabitants either had not the means or did not find it worthwhile to cultivate. It was the worse quality of land. A Khudkasht ryot would leave the rakar lands of his own village to be cultivated by a pahikasht ryot, while he cultivated himself

as a pahikasht ryot the parua land of an adjacant village. (60)

**Ubari or Talukdari :** The tenure was intricate in the since that these were the revenue free or jagir tenures. They had been granted under the Maratta rule in reward for 'services'. (61) The ruling power annual payment much below the full demand during the life of the grantee. The British supported the Ubaridars in order to win their support.(62)

**Bhaichara :** This was very typical to Bundelkhand. It signified '4 brothers', when applied to land tenure it indicated that the cultivators of the village paid alike with the extent to their cultivation. Mainly it represented the efforts of a fluctuating population to cultivate any particular village to the maximum with the advantage of having to pay the government the original quota fixed on him.(64) It is to be noted that the proprietors of Bhaichara estates had a common interest in other lands and that the mode of sharing the profits in such estate was by sharing the proceeds of the lands.(65) As long as the system of Bhaichara sharing the surplus rates at estates continued, the ryot, the proprietary interests were inseparably connected.(66)

**Jagir, Maafee and Chir Holdings :** These were lands which were the revenue free estates and were based on the partition treaties made between Scindhia and the ex-Raja of Banpur.(76) The total average of such land was nearly 96,856 acres thereby exposing that revenue free estates were numerous in Bundelkhand district.

**Kuabandi** : This tenure was on the very poor land, but the irony is that holders of this tenures paid dues on time to the government.

**Dekha-Parki** : Whereby the standing crop was appraised for revenue determination.(70)

**Pauth** : Was a peculiar tenure which affected both proprietor and cultivators - a system of rotation under which plot of land passed in annual succession to different co-sharers or cultivators. It was chiefly found in small alluvial mahals, where land could not satisfactorily be distributed amongst the various patti. (71) Where the area of alluvial land was extensive it was divided generally among the co-sharers.

**Jamai tenant** : In Banda the privilege of cultivating land at the revenue rates had survived and contributed a cultivating tenure which had been <sup>ignored</sup> imposed by the British laws.(72) The Jamai tenant was the survivor of the ordinary resident tenant who in the former days paid only the revenue rates.

**Patwari Tenure** : Patwari tenures were those in which the estate was held by several co-sharer each of whom was responsible for his due share of the revenue.(73)

**Bhejberar Tenure** : Prior to British to take over of Bundelkhand this form of tenure had attracted so much attention but had since, practically disappeared and the words bhejberar and bhaichara possessed only their 'inert' meaning. The bhejberar tenure was the simplest and most elementary form of proprietary

right, the co-sharer had simply the right to cultivate as much land as he could, and for this he paid the quota of the demand due upon his lands.(74) It resembled very closely a Russian commune for in both cases the working power of a man's family came to be the measure of his holding. The most advantageous point was that this kind of tenure could long survive the fixation for a term of years of assessment which allowed a clear margin of profit after the payment of revenue. The repeated transfers of proprietary rights under British administration unnecessarily tended to weaken ancient customs. Bhejberar system was consistent with the idea of a permanent transferable property to be held under a fixed invariable assessment.

**Zamindari :** The zamindars who had generally since the beginning of the 18thC been allowed to contract for the revenue of large areas of the country were the only really well established revenue machinery.(75) By and large the zamindar's were not the tillers of the soil but they had a claim to a share in the produce. A century's growth had given them such a hold that they had not only become virtual landlords, that to ignore them was not possible.(76) It was the most common of the tenures. Under this all the co-parceners enjoyed a share in the general profit of the estates, according to the measure of their ancestral right and which was expressed in fraction of a rupee. In Bundelkhand zamindari was the most common tenure. 2/5th of the estates in the district were owned by single families or individuals and this consequently brought up the number of zamindari villages to considerably more than half of the whole area. The nature of

zamindari rights and interests differed from place to place.

Thus it is evident from the above that there was no one conspicuous tenure in this region in the latter half of the 18th century.

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5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Davidson. op. cit. p. 118.
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9. Ibid.
10. Atkinson. op. cit. p. 337.
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13. Ibid. p. 87
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid. pp. 100-101
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18. Drake Brockman. op. cit. p. 147.
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25. Ibid. p. 33.
26. Ibid. pp. 21-23.
27. Atkinson. op. cit. pp. 335, 337.
28. Powell. op. cit. p. 108.
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41. Ibid. p. 12.
42. Ibid.
43. Lane. op. cit. pp. 7-8.
44. Patterson. op. cit. p. 20.
45. Raw. op. cit. p. 16.
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47. Jenkinson. op. cit. pp. 19-20.
48. Ibid.
49. Ibid.
50. Ibid. paras 369-370.
51. Lane. op. cit. p. 10.

52. Ibid.
53. Ibid.
54. Ibid.
55. Patterson. op. cit. p. 27.
56. Cadell. op. cit. p. 62.
57. Jenkinson. op. cit. p. 87.
58. Baden Powell. op. cit. p. 110.
59. Revenue Records. No. 44/48 1st March, 1831.
60. Ibid.
61. Atkinson. op. cit. p. 281.
62. Jenkinson. op. cit. paras 373-378 and also Atkinson. op. cit. p. 282.
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70. Neale. op. cit. p. 73.
71. Cadell. op. cit. p. 11. and also Humphries op. cit. p. 42.
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73. Ibid.
74. Ibid.
75. Jenkinson. op. cit. p. 6.
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## Chapter 8 AGRICULTURE

Agriculture in Bundelkhand as has been reiterated earlier, was not of a high order as is evident from the nature of the soil which was not conducive to the growth of good crops which could yield high returns. The nature and variety of crops grown were mainly to fulfill local consumption. Added to these were the already mentioned reasons like absence of irrigation, vicissitudes of weather and the large proportion of high caste tenants and proprietors.

Further, the political disturbances amongst the different groups in the district, the absence of a suitable revenue system combined to hold back agricultural development. In the absence of any industrial development as an ancillary to cash crop product, agriculture should have received priority, but unfortunately it was not so. The following analysis will reveal the nature and character of the agriculture of Bundelkhand districts.

### Jhansi

#### Cultivated Area and Culturable Land

In the district of Jhansi "53.25% of the total population of the district depended on agriculture". (1) Yet the following statistics prove the steady decline of cultivated areas and the increase of culturable fallow.

Settlement	Dist	Total Area	Cultivated Acres	%
1st. 1864	Jhansi	8,78,563	4,20,348	48
	Lalitpur	1,23,022	2,88,600	25

2nd, 1889-92

Only 42% of the total area was under cultivation, meaning a further reduction of 4.5%. This probably was due to the transfer of the best cultivated villages of Jhansi district to Gwalior.(2)

1899

Lalitpur statistics showed that only 24% of the area was under the plough meaning a further reduction of 1%. (3)

1903-06

At the final settlement of Jhansi in 1903-06, only 33% of the total area was under cultivation.

Tehsilwise percentage under the plough in 1902-03 was:

Tehsil Mau	-	43%
" Moth	-	42%
" Garautha	-	40%
Tehsil Jhansi	-	39%
" Lalitpur	-	25% (4)

The figures show the steady decline from 48% in 1864 to 33% in 1903 over a period of forty years. A decline of 15% was colossal. This dealt a severe blow to the agricultural economy of the region. Only 10% of the area was irrigated, facilities for artificial irrigation were not satisfaction and of course the seasonal droughts or over-excessive rain had a direct impact on the extension of agriculture which could not reach its optimum level. There is hardly any evidence to show the government interest in improving the facilities which would boost agriculture.

One pertinent factor in Bundelkhand was land which was categorized as culturable fallow. It was important as this class of land was fairly extensive in this district. At the time of the first Settlement the proportion of culturable waste was 32% and 51% and Lalitpur respectively. At the time of the 2nd settlement these figures had risen to 41.5% and 62% respectively. The total

culturable fallow in tehsils Garautha, Jhansi, Mau and Moth was about 40% and in Lalitpur it exceeded 60%. (5)

An analysis reveals the causes for this increase in culturable fallow. Firstly the cultivators had to leave a certain amount of fallow which was necessary owing to the porous nature of the soil. Secondly, a margin in case of 'Kans' invasion or soil impoverishment. Thirdly, the culturable fallow increased as land changed hands from cultivating castes to non-agricultural castes who acquired land as mortgages or on sale ; proprietors were unable to meet revenue demands and hence disposed of their properties at the hands of Banias and money lenders. These new landlords were not interested in the extension of agriculture and kept cultivated land fallow. Another point was the incidence of high revenue. In order to avoid the burden of over assessment and heavy revenue demands, the proprietors of land left a large portion fallow to evade this demand at the time of settlement, though this was rare.

On the brighter side, mention must be made of the fact that the good seasons, a rapid extension of cultivation brought the fallow land under the plough. But these cultivations were very temporary and fluctuated with seasons, with the result that revenue assessment on fluctuating area was unfair.

#### **Do Fasli ( Double Cropping)**

A considerable area of Jhansi district about 11.781 acres roughly 3% of the total cultivable area was under 'double cropped'. The area of double cropping fluctuated considerably,

but there appears to have been a noteworthy increase. (6) Double cropping was confined to land on which the first crop was rice and " fields in which early millets and zaid crops were sown with the help of irrigation".(7) In Jhansi roughly 3% of land was double cropped as stated earlier and in Lalitpur it was 12.5%. In later years it went up to 5% and 14% respectively. The northern tehsils maintained a better status than the southern tehsils.

Double cropping should have increased agricultural output, but other retrogressive factors impeded this growth and consequently, there was no significant increase in the agricultural outturn. Moreover the area under double cropping was not substantial or significant to effect a large increase.

#### **Analysis of Kharif and Rabi Crops.**

The crops grown in Bundelkhand generally were the Kharif crops (spring) and Rabi crops (winter).

In Jhansi district Kharif crops covered approximately (with variations) around 4,87,740 acres or 68.8% of the total cropped areas as against 2,23,083 or 31.38% occupied by Rabi. This was different in the other districts of Bundelkhand.(8)

The relative areas under both harvest fluctuated widely but there was a tendency to extend the acreage at the expense of Rabi. In the 1900s, the Kharif acreage had increased to 71.2% as compared by tracts and tehsils. The average Rabi areas during the same period had been 23.59% of the total area cropped and the

Kharif percentage was 63.41%. (9) The reason was probably because of the uncertainty of the rains. the cultivators could not speculate on their harvests and therefore chose to change the sowing outturn from the winter harvest.

#### **Tehsilwise Analysis of Crops : Agricultural and Cash :**

Among the chief Kharif crops was rice, sugarcane, Juar, Kodon, Bajra, maize etc.

Rice	-	Mau, Jhansi, Lalitpur tehsils.
Sugarcane	-	Mau & Jhansi
Kodon	-	Jhansi & Lalitpur
Bajra	-	Garaautha & Lalitpur
Maize	-	Lalitpur.

Rabi Crops were wheat, gram, barley, sarson etc.

Wheat	-	Jhansi proper
Gram	-	Moth and Garaautha
Barley	-	Moth

Amongst the Kharif crops rice was an important crop and its cultivation was growing in popularity. The tehsils of Mau, Jhansi and Lalitpur grew roughly 20,000 acres of this crop as some irrigation was available especially around lakes and tanks. Sugarcane was grown but it did not occupy a prominent position as only 542 acres were under this crop. Though the acreage increased to nearly double but the quality grown was poor and inferior and only 'gur' could be made from it. (10) Maize, however, occupied about half the area with pulses like moong and urad covered 19,300 acres of which 70% was grown in Lalitpur. (11) Kodon was chief crop of Jhansi and Lalitpur as it occupied 6.8% and 21.8% respectively of the total cropped area. Juar was a popular crop occupying 26% of the total cropped area or 37.5% of the total Kharif area. (12).

None of the crops grown above was grown extensively.

Small proportions of a variety were grown with the result that none could give a high outturn, resulting in home consumption.

Among the Rabi crops, wheat was predominant, but again the area under its cultivation had diminished. In Jhansi proper it was mixed with gram, while in Lalitpur it was grown alone or mixed with barley. In the mixed acreage it occupied 3.4% of the total cropped area, which was very low. In Moth tehsil it was 15.5%. Gram however, grew on 15% of the total cropped area and about 52.1% of the Rabi Cultivation. Mau and Garautha grew this in combination with wheat. We find that Moth had the largest Rabi cultivation followed by Garautha tehsil as these tehsils black soil which afforded the best cultivation. Mar soil was most suited for cultivation. Even though Mau had a greater cultivated percentage, it did not utilize the area for Rabi crops due to the undulating character of the soils. The percentage of Rabi had been lowest in the southern tehsils because of the poor soils. Rabi cultivation was highest in Jhansi, Mau and Gurotha tehsils.

#### **Cash Crops :**

The cash crops grown in Jhansi district did not yield the high outturn which would form a substantial basis for agricultural prosperity. Cotton, for example, was grown it had been observed by Atkinson that "the cotton grown is very small and the produce is barely sufficient for the ordinary requirements of the inhabitants".(13) It was not grown alone but sown with other crops. Moth and Garautha tehsils grew cotton which occupied about 13.5% and 10.1% respectively. Mau and Jhansi

never held a conspicuous position and neither Lalitpur because of the red soil tract.(14)

Al plant fared the same as that of cotton. It was once valuable but lost its importance and had practically become extinct. The competition from aniline dyes had killed this industry. Further, no encouragement was given by the British for the development of indigenous industry and consequently it had become extinct. The expenses incurred in cultivating Al were high and therefore it was not grown on a large scale, only local needs were meted to make Kharua cloth.

Oil seeds included Til which occupied 10.7% of the cultivated area. The return was profitable and in later years production doubled in Mau, Gaurotha and Moth but remained the same in Jhansi.

Therefore we see that there was no production of substantive cash crops to further economic prosperity. Incentives were of course lacking, but it seems the people were content with the small holdings and small output. There was hardly any effort to give any impetus to agricultural or cash crops.

#### **Jalaun**

The agricultural system taken as a whole in the district of Jalaun was not at par with that of the Doab, but it was better than other districts of Bundelkhand. In later years Jalaun ranked amongst the wealthiest and most fertile district of this province. From the inception of British rule in the Koonch and

Kalpi area, and also in subsequent years Jalaun ranked amongst the wealthiest and most fertile districts of the province. In fact Koonch was described as the "garden of N W P and had roughly 71% of its total area under cultivation at the settlement of 1842. (15)

#### **Cultivated Area and Culturable Land**

The following statistics give us a picture of the high degree of cultivation practised here, unlike Jhansi: (16)

1863 - 64	4,32,199 acres	61% of the total area
1874	6,11,858 "	65% "
1884	5,96,799 "	63% "
1885 - 95	5,58,767 "	
1888 - 97	Depression	
1896	5,24,922 "	
1897	Slow recovery evident	
1906	5,79,383 acres	
1906	Koonch had 72% of its total acreage cultivated	
	Jalaun had 71%	
	Kalpi had 50% easterly paraganas	
	Orai had 52%	

The steady decline was not only due to bad seasons but also the famines which resulted in devastation and migration. 1897 was particularly a bad year as the cultivated acreage had been reduced to nearly half. The ravages of kans also undermined cultivation. Though Jalaun had enjoyed prosperity the limits of profitable cultivation was never achieved. As in Jhansi, the necessity of fallow in poorer lands were always responsible for large areas being out of cultivation. Again, the quality of the soil did not support a good cultivation.

Prior to 1874, the unculturable area increased in various parts of the district which meant agricultural land was being

thrown out of cultivation. The extent of unculturable land was highest in Kalpi and Orai and least in Koonch and Jalaun.(17) The reasons for this increase are not difficult to find. The continued loss of population and the absence of remunerative prospects of agriculture, people migrated to the fertile areas of the Doab or to Malwa where they could make an existence. Secondly, the ever extending erosion and devastation caused by nature. Thirdly, an important factor was the gradual decline of old markets and flourishing towns and the development of new ones along newly opened rail routs. Fourthly, unequal and excessive revenue assessment which had always depressed Orai and which had the obvious result of throwing large areas out of cultivation as the land became more and more unprofitable to work. Last but not least was the ruinous effects of kans on the most fertile tracts. All these combined to undermined the agricultural development of Jalaun which had once enjoyed the pinnacle of prosperity.

#### **Analysis of Kharif and Rabi Crops.**

Like Jhansi, of the two main harvests, Rabi was the more important one, as far as the area sown was concerned. In 1874, it covered 3,52,978 acres or 57.69% of the cultivated area. Kharif occupied a lower percentage, that of 3,52,880 acres which amounted to 42.31%. No definite reasons can be ascribed for this, but the main causes seem to be the fluctuations of the areas sown with different crops in accordance with the character of the seasons hence the Rabi areas were more. In Orai the difference was highest where 67% of the cropped area was normally devoted to Rabi. In Koonch it was 62% and Kalpi 50%.

As in Jhansi district the Kharif staples were Bajra and Juar, Kodon, sugarcane. The millets, bajra and Juar were sown alone or combined with arhar and cotton. These crops in combination occupied 86% of the entire cultivated area. Bajra was a very popular crop and as the outturn was very high, we find it was mainly grown in the tehsils of Kalpi and Jalaun with a 32.62% and 26.79% respectively. Orai had 25.38% and Koonch had the lowest cultivated area of 10% of its Kharif crop. But since 1874, the area had decreased by approximately half.(19)

Juar the great black soil Kharif staple occupied alone, and in combination with arhar, it covered 43.42% of the autumn harvest. There was an increase after 1874, when it covered 35.28% of the Kharif. An interesting factor to note is that in Koonch area the cultivation of Juar increased at the expense of Rabi crop, as it had a very high outturn of three maunds per bigha or seven maunds per acre.(20)

The lesser Kharif crops did not make much headway in Jalaun. Sugarcane was grown in Jalaun and Koonch tehsils, but not on a large scale to warrant any substantial output. Kodon was grown mainly in Kalpi and Orai.

The great Rabi staple was gram which was mixed with wheat and in combination it occupied 53.2% of the entire Rabi crop. Tehsil Koonch had 68.6%, Orai 65.6%, Jalaun 44% and Kalpi 33.7% of the cultivated area under this crop.(20a) The reasons for wheat and gram being sown in this combination was to give judicious farmer some insurance against one crop failure to be

able to retrieve some amount from the other. Secondly, no matter how rich the soils were, the wheat exhausted the soil. In black soil tracts when year after year, a crop was taken off the same field without the application of manure the benefits of rotation and fallow were simultaneously obtained through planting the leguminous crop in combination with the wheat. This practice was innovative in the sense that the Bundelkhand farmer was not apathetic to agriculture and his exhibits his sagacity in the precautions he undertook rather than display indifference. Further, the question of insurance also was enhanced by the great likelihood of the destruction of the wheat crop.

#### **Do Fasli**

Irrigation facilities were slightly more developed in Jalaun and consequently, small areas were devoted to rice cultivation. However, Double cropped or do fasli area were not of great importance in Jalaun. It was only 3.6% of the total area, whereas in Jhansi it was 3% which was even lower. Double cropping did not yield good results, hence it was not popular.

#### **Analysis of Cash Crops**

The cash crops grown in Jalaun were Cotton, Indigo, Poppy but none of these crops were grown with a commercial view, so as to receive a good outturn. Small acreages were devoted to these crops which were grown in mixture with other crops like arhar etc.

Cotton was grown in Koonch where it occupied 25%, in

Orai 18%, in Kalpi and Jalaun roughly 18% of the total cultivated area. The reason was that cotton no longer was an important crop. Writing in 1842, Mr. Muir stated, "The cotton plant grows to great perfection in Bundelkhand and its produce is not only abundant, but also of a softer texture and of a white colour than that of Doab".(21) The expenses incurred in cotton growing were small and profits large but the decline in prices and the introduction of canal irrigation cotton was displaced by cereals. However, in Jalaun a higher acreage was devoted to cotton cultivation than in any other district. The produce was sent to Kanpur. The benefits did not reach the growers as they were unable to get the prices for it.(22)

Indigo, was grown in Orai and Koonch ; linseed in Jalaun tehsil, Al in Ata, Koonch and Orai tehsils. All these were utilised locally. A new crop grown was that of poppy from which opium was extracted. Though only 1,666 acres was occupied by poppy, out of which 2/3rds was in Jalaun tehsisl, it fetched good prices and had a good market.(23)

On the whole the cash crops did not give the Jalaun farmer a substantial return, so that he could be encouraged to grow more of these crops. The lack of high returns deterred the farmers from going into the cultivation of cash crops.

#### **Banda**

The district of Banda in keeping with the other districts of Bundelkhand was also not agriculturally progressive. The same reasons of poor soil, the uncertainty of agricultural return,

combined with the absence of irrigation and scantiness of the population and the less industrious agricultural caste were factor responsible for the retardedness in agriculture.

The predominant feature, is the absence of valuable cash crops like sugar cane ; the haphazard way crops were mixed and the carelessness with which cultivation was carried on ; the procedure of hastily tilling the light lands like Parua or rakar with the first rains and light crops like juar, moong or urad sown with cotton were ploughed sown ; in the black soils the people generally waited how the season would progress and consequently in case of heavy rainfall, then Kharif sowings were concentrated on light soils only ; methods of cultivation were not up to the mark ; if the weather was not favourable then cotton was planted in mar and Kabar.

This presents a rather dismal picture of the province which, the British administration did not endeavour to mitigate. Rather they levied the short commings on the careless and improvident agriculture carried out by kurmis and Lodhis. However, there were some industrious communities in the district who took interest in the cultivation and made efforts to see that they received a good outturn. Here, the population was more diffused in hamlets, which ensured an extension of the area of close cultivation and a better aim of prosperity reigned over the village.

#### Cultivated Area and Culturable Land

Banda cultivation has shown the maximum vicissitude in

the percentage of crop production. Taking into account the various factors which impeded agricultural output. Banda had a low acreage.

In the 1842 settlement around 9,84,939 acres were under cultivation. During the period between 1877-79 there was drop of 13% in the cultivated area, that is the acreage came to 8,60,224. Barely 44% of the entire district was under the plough. In 1882 - 83, the situation improved when cultivation reached a high water mark of 1,05,677 acres. This unfortunately did not continue to the later years to enable the cultivators to reap good harvests and monetary returns. In 1896, the cultivated acreage reached a low of 6,62,855. This period was followed by drought years and famines.(24)

In the begining of the 1900s cultivation picked up and the figure went up to 8,66,585. These figures are ample proof of the great variation to which cultivation was liable. The statistics show that the district was most prosperous in the decade which ended in 1890. Rains were regular and cultivation remained constant and population increased. Between 1895 - 96 enormous damage was caused.

In the beginning of the 20thC, cultivation picked up and almost all tehsils returned half of their acreage under the plough. Henceforth, the proportion of the cultivated area throughout the district was constant.

In Banda an interesting factor was that inspite of the vicissitudes of agricultural acreage the culturable fallow was

the minimum. In Mau, Girwan and Badausa tehsils, the average cultivated area fell short of culturable, but unculturable waste amounted to 26%. In Baberu, Kamasin, Pailani and Banda, the cultivated area exceeded the culturable land which was a positive indication that in the right environment, with all the factors conducive for agricultural development, the cultivator took advantage of them to better his own position. One optimistic point to be noted is that the extension of cultivation did take place. In 1902, a fallow area of 6,69,651 acres was returned to cultivation which increased the agricultural return in terms of produce. (25)

#### **Do Fasli**

As in other parts of Bundelkhand, the practice of do fasli was carried on here too, but it did not bear two mature crops. Reasons being that the soil could not sustain a good crops as it was depleted of its nutrients which were supplemented by local manure only. Only 56,695 acres were devoted to double cropping (1889 - 1898). However there was a slight increase in (1901 - 02) then the acreage increased to 61,458 acres over the whole district. (26)

Double cropping was not a distinctive feature of the agricultural system. It existed largely in the Jurai tract of Baberu, the northernly portion of Badausa. Crops such as rice were grown in autumn so it could be harvested in time for the Rabi crops to be sown.

#### **Analysis of Kharif and Rabi Crops**

In Banda, unlike Jhansi and Jalaun, Kharif crops gained precedence over Rabi. Here the Kharif growings were 55% and Rabi 45% in the normal seasons. There were, however great variations both in the different tehsils and in the different years. In Karwi the Rabi area occupied only 40% and in the rest of the area over 48%. In Banda tehsil, the Rabi area exceeded the Kharif by 4%. in the years of good rainfall, both spring and winter crops were almost at par in acreage.(27)

In keeping with the other districts, here too the Kharif staples were juar, rice, bajra, arhar, kodon and pulses. Juar was grown in the tehsils of Banda, Pailani, Badausa, rice in Baberu which had the bulk cultivation and northern parts of Girwan and Badausa tehsils. Rice growing had started becoming popular and the acreage increased especially in favourable seasons. Some sugarcane was grown, but this district was unsuited to this crop. The millets like bajra, juar, arhar etc. were grown in small proportions as these were not popular crops in Banda.(28) They were confined to light sandy parua soils near the Jumna. The average acreage in the six tehsils where they were grown was only 5,938 acres or under 6% of the cropped area and even then they were in combination with other crops. Mau, Banda, Badausa, Girwan tehsils grew these crops.

The other lesser Kharif crops were kodon which was not an important crop, but onl a 'gap filling one'. It was grown in the 'patha' tracts in the Karwi tehsil, in Mau and Pailani it occupied 6.89%, 4.73% and 3% respectively of the total cropped area.(29)

Among the Rabi crop the favourites were gram, wheat and barley. Gram covered 31% of the total Rabi crop making it the most important crop. Together with wheat the crops covered 90% of the total cropped area in Banda district. (30) In no other district of Bundelkhand did this combination occupy such an extensive area. Gram and wheat were sown in combination for the dread of 'rust' which destroyed wheat crops. In case one crop failed the cultivators could retrieve some money from the sale of the other.

#### Analysis of Cash Crops

The growing of cotton largely decreased as in other parts of Bundelkhand. From 25.9% in 1842, it covered merely 14% in 1877 - 78. In the absence of irrigation Bundelkhand could no longer compete with the Doab districts and the low prices that followed the close of the American civil was made its cultivation unremunerative. The decrease in cultivation had been serious loss to the district and the substitution with juar had only partially filled the loss. Consequently, the Karwi cotton mill fell into disuse for being under utilized. Linseed, castor oil plant, common hemp were grown but they did not cover a substantial area to warrant a good harvest.

To conclude one may say that the Banda paragana fared better than Jhansi. However, it was also subject to periods of scarcity due to the spread of Kans and the damage caused by heavy rain or severe drought. The area was reduced to a condition of almost general bankruptcy. "The area under cultivation largely

diminished and the declining state of the district was further attested by the dilapidated condition of the habitants and their squalid appearance - - - - -."

### **Hamirpur**

In consonance with the rest of the districts Hamirpur fared no better than its counterparts. The people were simple of an adjustable nature, content with existing circumstances. They could conform to any situation. Hence, the urge and desire to improve the situation, to better their conditions didn't find much popularity. But this compromising nature could have been the result of years of depression which they had been subjected to. The adverse factors restraining the agricultural development impeded the progress and the general upliftment of the economic standard. The absence of positive steps to alleviate these conditions and the supplementary aid incase of crop failure attributed to the poverty of the distict and cultivators. It would therefore be incorrect to heap the shortcomings on them, for they couold not be blamed for factors they had no control on.

### **Cultivated Area and Culturable Land**

The cultivated area fluctuated continuously as was common in Bundelkhand. Commencing in 1842 upto 1865, 65% of the culturable area was under the plough. There was an increase in 1880 when the figure rose to 7,35,758 acre. Upto 1887, the area enjoyed a high degree of prosperity. Because of the ensuing drought, the figures dropped to 6,53,505 acres in 1895. The

period between 1897 - 1901 witnessed a further decrease when the total cultivated land averaged 6,10,987 acres. In the 1900s, when factors were conducive the figures rose to 7,21,129 acres. These figures expose the constant fluctuations in the cultivated acreage which directly affected agricultural production and the prosperity.(31) Though in most paraganas more than half the land was under the plough but this was not substantial to produce enough food grains or cash crops, to yield high returns.

Rath	77.3%	of its cultivable area under the plough.(32)
Hamirpur	58.7%	
Sumerpur &		
Maudha	52.2%	
Mahoba	42.7%	
Kulpahar	53.1%	

The culturable land including the small areas under groves comprised 36.7% of the total area of the district. One very important factor was that a sizeable area was returned as old fallow meaning land which was formerly under the plough, but from which all signs of cultivation had disappeared, but in times of congenial weather, could be brought under the plough. But unfortunately even the inclusion of this tract for cultivation was not able to pay the revenue debts which accrued in the bad years.

#### **Do Fasli**

The seasonal variations in the harvests are reflected in the area which were cropped more than once. This acreage increased almost three fold between 1845 and 1890, thereby signifying the growth in popularity of double cropping. Even the

double cropping was not a marked feature of the agricultural system, and only the tehsils of Rath, Kulpahar and Mahoba followed do fasli.

#### **Analysis of Kharif and Rabi crops**

In Hamirpur Kharif crops were preferred to Rabi, where 59.4% of the cropped area was devoted to Kharif and 40.2% to Rabi. But these proportions were subject to the fluctuations according to the season. In case of a good rain, an extensive area would be prepared for Rabi and a corresponding diminution of the Kharif. There were differences in the tehsils too. The north eastern and predominantly black soil paraganas of Hamirpur and Maudaha had their cultivation evenly distributed between the two harvests. Maudaha tehsil was in favour of Rabi. In the south and south westerly tehsils the Kharif predominated. (Rath, Kulpahar and Mahoba).

The principle Kharif crops occupied roughly 46.4% of the total Kharif area. These were juar, in combination with arhar. Til was a very popular crop of Hamirpur district as the following figure shows. In 1880 it had an acreage of only 4.2% of the Kharif area, and twenty years later in 1903, it covered 13.5%. Hamirpur tehsil had about 4% and Maudaha 7% of its Kharif area. Mahoba had 20% and Kulpahar 18%. The yield was high and the outturn good so the cultivators indulged in the growing of til. In no other district of Bundelkhand was it grown so extensively. (33)

Arhar was also popular as it gave a good outturn. Rath,

Mahoba tehsils had roughly 6% of their area under this crop. Rice growing was gaining popularity, but it was not grown extensively for lack of irrigation facilities. A special crop grown in Hamirpur was 'pan' in the tehsil of Mahoba and Rath where through many centuries of cultivation it had attained the status of being an important but delicate crop. The product was exported throughout India. Gram and wheat were chief Rabi crops and in combination they occupied 89% of the Rabi area. Barley was also grown, especially in Kulpahar and Mahoba. It also covered 7.4% of the Kharif crop, thus making it a perennial crop.

#### **Analysis of Cash Crops**

Opium and tobacco were typical cash crops grown in almost all the tehsil. Opium was most largely grown in Kulpahar and tobacco in Rath and Mahoba. In due course the crops gained popularity and the products were much sought after, but they could not be grown on a large scale due to government restrictions. Linseed was popular in Mahoba tehsil, sugarcane was confined to Rath and Kulpahar. Indigo was found in Rath and Kulpahar.

From the foregoing account a clear picture emerges of the agricultural condition of Bundelkhand. One finds the absence of major cash crops which could yield high returns and become the props of agricultural prosperity. Whatever crops were sown like cotton, al or indigo were either of inferior quality or had lost its market importance. Consequently Bundelkhand lacked the sustaining power so necessary of any agricultural economy.

Lesser crops like til, kodon etc. could not sustain the agricultural prosperity. Wheat and rice were to some extent successful but the cultivated acreage was not optimum in this province. Lack of encouragement to grow crops like sugarcane and cotton, by the British was another factor. As there is evidence of sugarcane presses and cotton mills one may assume that these crops were popular earlier.

Poor agricultural outturn can be attributed to numerous factors, primarily the soil conditions which yield a good harvest. This was lacking completely in Bundelkhand. Only a few sq. miles of land was the 'black soil' and the rest of the land was 'waste' or unculturable. The ravinous nature of the topography did not make cultivation easy. The lack of irrigation facilities was a major factor in the retardness of agriculture in this district. In times of rain failure there was no supplementary irrigation to sustain the crops till harvest. Hence, the field crops dwindled in adverse weather resulting in frequent crop failure. The vagaries and uncertainties of the weather i.e. the rains in Bundelkhand were an erratic factor and we find that no measures were undertaken to combat this failing, by the government. Added to these woes, was the incessant revenue demands which ruined the cultivators. He was not assisted to overcome the difficulties which were beyond his control to rectify. These bore repercussions in the abandonment of agriculture, migrations to lucrative places or mortgages and dues.

For almost a century this had been the state of

affairs. Consequently, agriculture diminished, population became scarce and land lay fallow and added up being 'waste'. Except for a few intermittent years, agriculture deteriorated and this caused the backwardness of the region which ensues till today.

The people were industrious. In comparision to other provinces e.g. Doab, cultivation had reached its optimum level. Had facilities been given, agriculture would not have suffered to the degree it had. Though an agricultural station had been established at Orai in 1905 to study and experiment the texture of soils, eradicate 'kans' serve as a centre for seed and implements, to study the local conditions of agriculture and subsequently offer help to cultivators, the damage had been done to Bundelkhand and to retrieve it to a flourishing standard was a far cry, depression laid waste to the region which could not regain its pristine glory and agricultural status.

1. Jenkinson, E.G. op. cit. p. A. (forward note of A. Colvin).
2. Impey and Meston. op. cit. p. 29.
3. Drake Brockman, D.L. op. cit. Jhansi District Gazeteer. p. 39.
4. Ibid.
5. Atkinson, E. T. op. cit. p. 250.
6. Drake Brockman. op. cit. p. 41.
7. Ibid.
8. Atkinson. op. cit. p. 250.
9. Ibid.
10. Drake Brockman. op. cit. p. 49.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid. :
13. Atkinson. op. cit. p. 316.
14. Drake Brockman. op. cit. p. 43 - 44.
15. Ternan. op. cit. p. 22.
16. Ibid. p. 23 - 24.
17. Ibid.
18. Drake Brockman. op. cit. Jalaun District Gazeteer. p. 24.
19. Ibid. p. 25.
20. Ibid.
- 20a. Ibid.
21. Ibid. p. 26.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.

24. Drake Brockman. op. cit. Banda District Gazetteer. p. 41.
25. Ibid.
26. Ibid. p. 44.
27. Ibid. p. 45.
28. Ibid. p. 47.
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid.
31. Drake Brockman. op. cit. Hamirpur District Gazetteer. p. 25.
32. Ibid. p. 25.
33. Ibid. p. 31.

## CONCLUSION

From the foregoing account, an idea of the evolution of the concept of proprietorship, the formation of the new land order, the behavioural pattern of the revenue settlements and the economic conditions as they emerged in the 19thC and in the first half of the 20thC, is apparent.

The basic truth which confronted Bundelkhand was that it had not been a progressive region of the country for reasons enumerated earlier. These factors grossly impeded the economic progress which manifested itself in failing to provide stability and prosperity to the area. An analysis of the Summary and Regular Settlements reveal the shortcomings inherent in them.

### Character and Working of Summary and Regular Settlements

The settlements in Bundelkhand district were made in the initial years by inexperienced army officers who made arbitrary settlement. The object was the collection of revenue for the sustenance of power. Summary settlements were to high and that the deterioration that had set in generally throughout the district has mainly been attributed to the over assessment and the severity with which they were imposed. There was no uniform policy of revenue assessment as has been seen. Consequently, rate of assessment became uneven. In an earlier chapter mention has been of the fact that while certain assessing officers applied the produce rates others resorted to oil rate for working out the revenue rate. Though British settlement officers in their reports claimed fairness or lightness with which they made the

assessment, but it has been clearly seen that this was not so.(1)

Revenue settlements in the districts of Bundelkhand were introduced at times when they were recovering from one or the other calamity. With the result that none of the settlements yielded positive results or provided incentives to cultivators to improve their lot. Revisions lowered the revenues but the benefit did not reach the agriculturist a destructive role played by nature prevented the alleviation from economic hardship. Settlements could not run a full term and revisions became necessary.

The new land system was evolved to ensure a continuous stable revenue for the British Government, By keeping the revenue settlements temporary <sup>and</sup> ~~the~~ subject to revision periodically, the government reserved the right to participate in the increase of rent arising from any expansion or improvement in the quality and value of produce or in the prooductivity of land.

#### Jalaun :

In the paragana of Jalaun an analysis of Major Ternan's settlements reveals that his settlement was not made on any systematic or scientific plan. The assessment was based on special set of rate for each village, instead of average rates. Settlements were of a 'rough and ready' character. Considerable amount errors appeared as both <sup>as</sup> to the area of the land and to the classification of soils.(2) The enhancement made in 1886 - 87 was very unevenly distributed. It fell with great

severity on paragana Orai, the revenue raised by 28.20%, contributing to 38.46% of the total enhancement. In paragana Jalaun the increase was 17.9%. Within these paraganas the burden fell mainly on good mar soil. Settlements came at an unfortunate time when agricultural depression had set in, population was falling and Kans reappeared.(3)

The irony was that the resultant falling off in cultivation was implied by settlement officers as deliberate concealment. Some unrented areas were treated with moderation. But some very heavy assessment were taken from individual villages 'here and there', and the assessments subsequently became unbearable. ✓

Seasons, following the 1874 assessments were generally unfavourable. Amounts accrued and at the end of 1891, arrears stood at Rs. 45,136. Meanwhile the ditrict was reported to be in a "condition of progressive decay". In many villages which were 'attached,' the total rents did not amount to the revenue and cesses. In 1892 a revision was ordered. Reductions were made but even in 1896-97 heavy balances continued. In 1903 the term of settlements was to expire but the hopeless breakdown of the assessments in the district during the previous ten years had brought to the front the question of fluctuating assessments. The Jalaun district was the first to be assessed under the new suggestion of 1903 under Hailey on the Punjab system for thirty years.(5) Right from the onset the settlement was harsh, Mr. Balmain writing in 1855 says "in support of the fact that the government demand presses very severly".(6)

**Hamirpur :**

In Hamirpur, although Allen and Muir had reduced the assessment which brought temporary relief to the paragana of Sumerpur, Maudaha, Rath and Panwari.(7) Some reductions were made on account of the disturbances of 1857.

In the post 1857 period, the regular settlements were conducted with a view to re-settlement.(8) The settlement may be summarized by saying that a revenue amounting to about 53% of the gross asset on an average area of cultivation was taken and the settlement was reduced. But it did not remove the inequalities of the previous settlement which either was or had in process of time become unequal in the incidence. Owing to the system pursued, that is, determination of rates, all computations were done by putting the assets by valuing all cultivation at rates accepted by the settlement officer. Consequently in Hamirpur paragana the valuation was in excess of recorded rents. Sumerpur and Rath were valued with more severity than Hamirpur. In no paragana was the burden of the revenue evenly distributed and generally speaking parua and other light soils were treated favourably at the expense of mar.(9)

The over assessment in large portions of this district gave concern and anxiety to the revenue authorities. The paragana displayed severe depression. Heavy arrears of revenue, numerous alienation and decline in cultivation became apparent. Legislation had little or no impact on the condition of the people.

### **Banda :**

The settlement of Cadell in Banda was regarded as a fairly moderate one in view of the fact that he made a comprehensive and exhaustive study of the past fiscal history of Bundelkhand. The rates he calculated were applied universally. He aimed at moderation but, controversy arose over the suitability of the assumed standard of cultivation of which the assessments were based and in cases where this exceeded the actual area under cultivation the necessity of progressive jamas arose.(10) This was particularly the case in Augasi and Baberu. Again remissions were not granted, disregarding the condition of the district in view of the fact that such a course would have entailed an enormous loss to the government. The authorities argued that the demand could be paid in anticipation of the villages recovering and presuming that the bad economic conditions would not prevail for eternity. These demands were not fully justified and attempts were made to introduce progressive assessments which did not work out either.(11)

The settlements over the whole district were sanctioned for a period of twenty years. The demand fixed by Cadell and Patterson left the cultivators some profit in years of bumper harvests which brought some relief and the jamas were realized without difficulty. On the whole the Settlements in Banda worked better than other paraganas.

### **Karwi :**

In Karwi, the revenue continued to be raised year after

year and the cultivators paid under duress. Hence, the government thought that the cultivator could pay. However, this was not so as the value of the land had fallen and property was being disposed off to pay arrears.

**Jhansi :**

Similar conditions prevailed in Jhansi too. Settlements (summary) were conducted under diverse conditions and by different officers at different times to have had any uniformity in them. It had previously suffered from over assessment, depredations and want of capital. The worst feature in the condition of Jhansi was the indebtedness of the proprietors. (11)

Though Jenkinson wrote in 1871 that the "district has been very fairly," (11b) he over looked the extensive sensitiveness to vicissitudes of season and outbreak of kans, could only be anticipated by him in a small degree. Jenkinson's settlement was confirmed for twenty years i.e. up to June 30th, 1884. Hardly had it commenced the district was devastated by famine known as the great "Pachisa". The cultivators were hit hard by it. This was followed by a season of excessive rains. Cultivators migrated to Malwa. Settlement officers made authorized or unauthorized remissions to keep the situation under control. (11c) Enquiries were made to find the actual condition but the decine had already set in and arrears had started to accrue. A revision was ordered but it could not be effected. Jenkinson's assessments were light in some paraganas and severe in others. (11d) Jenkinson himself contradicted his own

statement about the evenness of his assessment. Bhandar assessment was very light, but in the cases of Mau and Pandwaha it was not so. (11e) As stated earlier settlement officers did not pay much attention to the potentiality of 'paying' they concentrated on extraction. The excessive burden of assessment on Mau and Pandwaha were far reaching. In fact J.S. Porter who was entrusted by the government to investigate into the causes as to why the zamindars of Mau were impoverished, stated in his report that the assessments imposed on these paraganas were unduly high.

(11f) To reiterate, the functioning of the first regular settlement of Jhansi by Jenkinson was disturbed because of natural calamities. Confronted by adversities the working of the settlement was impeded.

The second regular settlement was conducted at a period when the district had not yet recovered from the aftermath of the earlier disasters. But the encouraging factor was that average cultivation had increased upto 18.81% (11g) Hence there was an increase in the revenue by 12% (11h), combined with the revenue from revenue free holdings. (11i) But this did not improve the economic condition of the district as the cycle of the growth of kans and bad weather impeded cultivation. The settlement therefore was unable to provide any benefit or mitigate the sufferings of the people. (11j)

Revision of the settlement was instituted by Pim but it could not be of much benefit as by the beginning of the 20thC, Bundelkhand had been thrown into the throws of debt and starvation that to reprieve it from this situation was not possible easily.

The final settlement under Lane was again instituted but it too couldn't give Bundelkhand a chance to recover. Even after India became independent, Jhansi remained in much the same condition as before.

Lalitpur fared in much the same way. The jama fixed by the summary settlements exposes the uneven and heaviness of it. Subsequently by the later settlement officers. (11k)

During the first regular settlement of Lalitpur was reduced, but the assessment was not a fair and just one. There is ample evidence to prove that the prosperous villages worked by industrious landlords who were also in possession of these villages, were assessed heavily in order to extract the maximum revenue. (11L) The assessment was light in villages under Bundela Thakurs. Although the second regular settlement was due to run for thirty years it couldn't complete the term due to the same reasons. A revision was made along with the Jhansi revision in 1903. The revision lowered the revenue, but did not solve the problems the cultivators.

Hence it may be concluded that the settlements did not help the cultivator who were to benefit from them. Not much consideration was given to the biggest factor controlling agriculture in Jhansi and Lalitpur - the weather. No priority was given to study the details of the assessments and their viability. Even in times of distress, the jama was collected with severity. It was but inevitable that settlements would break down as they did.

### Consequence of Introduction of Revenue Settlements :

The introduction of revenue settlement in Bundelkhand brought basic transformation of the economic relations in the different classes of the agricultural community. The new rights of property as conferred by the British superceded all the pre-existing customary rights of property in land. By the new arrangements, proprietors enjoyed not merely full rights of private property in land including the right to extract maximum rent from tenants and to evict them. They also secured exclusive rights of private property in wasteland, pastures and forests etc. which formerly the joint property of the village community as a whole.

As a result of these settlements people who had enjoyed rights from the time of their ancestors were displaced and new rights were conferred on newly created land proprietors. Rights of non-engaging co-sharer village zamindars and other cultivators were lost to the single co-sharer village zamindars who were admitted to the revenue settlements as individual owners of the entire villages of which they were merely the village headmen. Those who purchased land at public auctions or through private sale also acquired right over the entire village community. One important point is that, the British Government aspired to create a class of local people whom they appeased and could trust. Hence they gave concessions to them thereby creating a group of 'loyal subjects' to assist them in their imperialistic designs.

Consequently, there emerged a motive force which began to undermine the basis of the socio-economic framework created by the British, culminated in the desertion of cultivation and resorting to criminal activities.

#### Reasons for Decline of Agriculture :

Though Bundelkhand had not been economically rich, it had become absolutely impoverished in capital and population. Prime cultivation land had been lying fallow as the cultivators were not able to cultivate on account of the consequences of high assessment which they had to bear. A sizable amount of the total population of the district depended on agriculture, but the condition of the agricultural economy was far from satisfactory.

The soil was not conducive to excellent harvests, and the frequent natural calamities and apathy of the cultivators towards improvement in agricultural practice, did retard progress. The methods of cultivation in Bundelkhand primitive and poor. In fact there had been little or no significant improvement in agricultural practice. The British failed to give <sup>due</sup> encouragement for the promotion of agriculture by various incentives. The soil had lost its richness due to continuous cultivation and because it wa not allowed to lie fallow to regain its nutritive value, it became depleted in natural resources. No cultivation could be carried out until this weed had completed its full course of 'life'.

Nevertheless, the percentage of unculturable land had been gradually decreasing. It must have had a beneficail effect

on the agricultural economy during those years. In comparision Jhansi lagged behind in agriculture compared to Jalaun, Banda and Hamirpur, the picture of the poor agricultural economy became clearer. In Jalaun the cultivated area and the cultivable waste were about 50% and 25% respectively.(12) As regards Banda the cultivated acreage amounted to 46% and the cultivable waste was about 30%.(13) In Hamirpur district, the cultivated acreage amounted to roughly 49.80% whereas the cultivable waste was about 37%.

#### **Effects of frequent territorial changes on the minds of cultivators.**

Owing to the many changes in the limits and boundaries of the paragans, constitutig the district, caused by the transfer to and from other district and native states the alteration in the distribution of villages as well as of the destruction of all the early records in 1857 led to a fear amongst cultivators as to whether their land would be transferred to another district. Consequently, this uncertainty did not encourage him to or rather deterred him from cultivating to the optimum between 1871-72, five of the most productive villages from Moth and fifteen from Bhander were tranferred to Gwalior.(15) This created an unsettled condition which was not conducive for agricultural progress.

In Jalaun territorial changes were executed in 1861 with the cessation of territory to Gwalior. Only forty three villages were left in Jalaun.(16) These made settlements difficult as different portions of the paragans were settled at

different times. Transfers were numerous in Lalitpur district, but here they were accompanied by a gradual increase in the market value of land.

Owing to many changes in the limits of the pargana constituting the district, caused by transfers to and from other district and native state, the alterations in the distribution of villages affected the productivity of properous villages, which inadvertently affected the prosperity of the province.(17)

#### **Effects of Severe Assessments and High Rates of Revenue.**

The repercussions of the above were felt throughout the state which resulted in the following conditions :

##### **Decline of Zamindars :**

The application of the Act of 1882 had reduced many zamindars from the status of owners to that of tenants. The problem emanated from the fact that the zamindars ran into debts which they were not able to pay the government. Consequently, a Bill was enacted to enable the government to purchase the lands of zamindar and advance them loans to pay off their debts and to prevent the landed property from going into the hands of the money lending communities and to benefit the ex-proprietors by restoring the latter to their original position either as government agents in the village or as ryots, cultivating under the British. But somehow the zamindars retained their proprietorship and consequently they continued their borrowing practices. Realising that the earlier lands did not and could not combat the evils, the British enacted the Alienation Land Act

1903 to remedy the evil of properties going into the hands of moneylenders. But it was too late to apply this regulation as the zamidars had already fallen prey to the moneylenders and Banias. The situation could have been arrested earlier and the zamindar would not have declined to that extent had the government taken corrective steps earlier.

#### Mortgages and Property Alienations :

There were few districts in the province whose history would forcibly illustrate the evils of over-assesment and the quiet ruin that could thus be brought on the Hamirpur people. As early as 1819, Forde the Collector brought to the notice of the Board of Commissioners that the district was over assessed.(18) Of the 815 estates in the district, 39 with a land revenue of Rs. 72,700 were sold by public auction. About 100 by private transfer. Poverty was apparent throughout the whole district in 1842, and the valuelessness of landed property were indisputable proofs of over assessment.(19)

In Jhansi, the figures by private sale increased due to land changing hands from one agriculturist to another or from one agriculturist to a non-agriculturist.(20) The sudden rise in the number of mortgages during 1337-41 fasli was almost certainly due to the reduction of the resources of petty zamindars owing to this step.

Vaishas and Jainas tried to evade the provisions of the Jhansi Land Act and acquire property in the village not for cultivation but to use it as a grazing ground and dispose it off

when land prices soared.(21) This proved greatly detrimental to the agricultural development.

The Jhansi Encumbered Act 1882 proved ineffective in arresting these kinds of sale. Finally, it was tackled by the Bundelkhand Land Alienation Act 1903 which curbed the sale of land by agriculturist castes.(22)

Around 1892, property alienations were busiest. In Jhansi it amounted to 11,251 acres (sold) and 45,276 acres mortgaged. Between 1893 - 1903 mortgages and alienations in the total area amounted to 11.92%. The degree of alienations was the same in Jhansi, Mau and Moth.(23) In the Lalitpur sub-division at the same time, about 70,000 acres were lost by the Thakurs to Bania.(24)

Similarly, in Jalaun the Marwari and Brahamins acquired land of about 1,121 estates or parts of estates with an area of 42,815 acres.(25) The total mortgages of the Jalaun, Orai, Madhogarh, Koonch and Kalpi totalled 42,259 acres.(26)

Between 1886 - 1902, there was a loss of Rs. 1,72,894 on an area of 1,10,769. Orai suffered the maximum when 52% of the whole area was transferred.(27) In Banda, the worst affected paragana was pailani of which 75% had been transferred.(28) In the sub-division of Karwi, 1,50,473 acres were sold or alienated for mortgages and payment of arrears. 1,89,046 acres of land was sold in the years since. 13% of the total culturable land went.(29)

These statistics presented a grim picture of the agricultural economy and the slipping out of land from the cultivating castes proved disastrous. One wonders why instead of enacting laws to prevent the sale, the British administration did not extend assistance to the cultivators to prevent the occurrence of this catastrophe.

#### Migrations :

Plagued by constant misery and calamities, congestion economic distress, agricultural decline, and the ever pervading heavy assessments gave rise to migrations from Bundelkhand. Agricultural production was much below the requirements of the population of the district. The scarcity of food grains continued throughout this period. An enquiry instituted in 1888 to report on the economic condition of the people also confirmed the inadequacy of food. A general bankruptcy ensued in the period of 1896, that it forced the government to rethink its policies on the matter of assessment of revenue.

As has been mentioned before migrations to Doab and neighbouring states which resulted in the decline of agriculture and population.

#### Dacoity and Crime :

The most prominent feature of British policy was the collection of revenue with utmost severity. Many British officers have contributed to the view that the district was being penalised but the Board did not listen to their suggestions. This

was to bear an adverse result which culminated in the fact that cultivators were left with no option but to abandon and flee their villages and take refuge in the ravines. Leaving their occupation as cultivators, they took up arms and indulged in criminal activities.(30) As there was no alternative source of revenue other than from the earnings of land revenue, which they used to collect from tenants, in case they were Thakurs, Zamindars themselves,(31) they took to criminal activities.

Further, even the personal holdings were divided up as a consequence of the increase in their families. Their extravagant habits forced them to borrow heavily from moneylenders against their holdings. The poverty induced them to take to dacoity and they formed or joined dacoit groups which mainly consisted of Bundelas.

The volume of crime increased in Jalaun especially in the years of agricultural distress. In Hamirpur and Lalitpur where Bundelas were in large numbers, dacoity became a serious problem as every village had dacoits.(32) The British government tried to tackle this by adding police forces in the area. Further, the authorities enforced the section 15 of the Arms Act (XI of 1878) on 6th Oct., 1890 in Lalitpur.(33) This Act prohibited the possession of arms of any description without special licence. But complete annihilation was not feasible and no permanent solution could be found.

#### Rise of Marwaris and Money Lenders :

A direct consequence of all the disasters which befell

Bundelkhand, was the prosperous rise of the moneylenders who belonged to the Marwari class, or the local vaisha. The Marwari class were new comers to the area who entered as they perceived the rich harvests of fortune they could reap here as a result of the financial distress of the local people. They appeased the British for their own advantage and became rich by lending money by taking in mortgages of land and property. Soon they emerged as the most prosperous class of people in Bundelkhand. They took no interest in the land, neglected agriculture and made huge profits.

#### **Hardships Created by Natural Calamities**

We are aware that Bundelkhand suffered from the vicissitudes of weather and that agriculture was entirely at the mercy of the season, where such harvests were reaped with a minimum of labour and while the disastrous results of an unfavourable season were not to be avoided by any foresight or exertion.

The people suffered severely in times of scarcity and any weakenings of their resources was gradually followed by a deterioration in the quality of crops sown. The ravages of kans needs no explanation. The damage this caused to soil is well known. Further, natural calamities like famines, floods culminated in the ruin of Bundelkhand.

Famines ravaged the region in the years between 1833 and 1900 intermittently. The famines of 1833, 1837, 1847-48, 1868-69, had an indelible bearing on the economic development of this

region. The famine of 1808 was followed by devastating floods in Jhansi district. Floods followed by drought added fuel to the already starving population to ignite the province. The government relief measures which were temporary and did not offer any permanent solution, e.g. like improving the irrigation facilities. Age old tanks built by local rulers did not suffice the need in the year of the famines. In fact Bundelkhand was reduced to a condition of "almost general bankruptcy".

#### **Advent of Christianity**

Christianity made its inroads into Bundelkhand after 1857. The missionaries came as messiahs to alleviate the miseries of the people. They played on the sentiments and offered them refuge in their religion and charitable measures. The impoverished class were greatly attracted to the new ideas by which they could profit. Christianity soon gained a foothold in the district. The missionaries established trade schools and also primary learning schools in Jhansi, Lalitpur, Banda etc. The socio-economic effects were far reaching. These activities rendered an opening for the people who looked upon them as their saviours. Consequently, they embraced the new religion which tried to ameliorate their sufferings.

As a result of the hardship created by man and nature, the uncertainty of the return, the injury that resulted from the failure of crops in the consequence of abandonment of lands, the desertion of cultivation the abundance of fallow land in Bundelkhand together with the scanty population all pointed towards need for a favourable settlement. Glancing at the revenue

history of Bundelkhand it is clear that a lighter assessment would have enabled the people to recover from the economic depredation which had befallen on them. Suggestions to make tenures more secure ; to limit the enhancement of revenue, at the periodical revision of settlements ; to reduce the attractive of litigation and to remove petty form of oppression. All these remained as proposals to be executed but little was done to mitigate the sufferings of Bundelkhand which made the district backward and it continues to remain so even till today as compared to the development and progress made in other parts of the country.

The Indian Government has taken steps to improve the condition of the people by setting up industries in the area to open employment opportunities for the people. Further, the exploitation of zamindars has been stopped forthwith after independence. The government is making endeavours to provide for ~~the lack of which is~~ irrigation, <sup>the biggest impediment in agricultural development.</sup> Agricultural loans have enabled farmers to up date their resources to modernise agriculture.

**Backnotes****Conclusion**

1. Jenkinson, E.G. op. cit. p. 105.
2. Drake Brockman, D.L. op. cit. Jhansi District Gazeteer. p. 91
3. Ibid. p. 97.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid. p. 101.
7. Drake Brockman, D.L. op. cit. Hamirpur District Gazeteer. p. 103.
8. Ibid.
9. Allen, C. and Muir, W. ed. op. cit. p. 89.
10. Cadell. op. cit. 18.
11. Ibid. p. 20.
- 11a. Drake Brockman. op. cit. Jhansi Dist. Gaz. p. 139.
- 11b. Jenkinson. op. cit. p. 105.
- 11c. Drake Brockman. op. cit. Jhansi Dist. Gaz. p. 140.
- 11d. Jenkinson. op. cit. p. 105.
- 11e. Ibid.
- 11f. Impey and Meston. op. cit. p. 55-56.
- 11g. Pim. op. cit. (forward note of R.W. Gullian) p. 4.
- 11h. Ibid.
- 11i. Ibid.
- 11j. Ibid.
- 11k. Pim. op. cit. p. 14.
- 11L. Ibid.
12. Drake Brockman. op. cit. Jalaun Dist. Gaz. p. 76.
13. Drake Brockman. op. cit. Banda Dist. Gaz. p. 55.

14. Drake Brockman. op. cit. Hamirpur Dist. Gaz. p. 60.
15. Impey and Meston. op. cit. p. 4.
16. Drake Brockman. op. cit. Jalaun Dist. Gaz. p. 63.
17. Jenkinson. op. cit. (forward note of A. Colvin) P.A. and also Pim. op. cit. p. 1.
18. Atkinson. op. cit. p. 75-76.
19. Ibid.
20. Lane. op. cit. p. 6.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. Pim. op. cit. p. 18.
24. Ibid.
25. White, P.J. op. cit. p. 3.
26. Ibid.
27. Hailey. op. cit. p. 4.
28. Humphries. op. cit. p. 23.
29. Patterson. op. cit. p. 75.
30. Pim. op. cit. p. 9.
31. Ibid.
32. Drake Brockman. op. cit. Jalaun Dist. Gaz. p. 105.
33. Ibid. p. 158 - 59.

### Glossary

Amil	Contract Revenue Collector
Batai	Division of Crop between Zamindar & Cultivator
Bhaichara	A form of joint land holding in which members of the community hold hands by true and equal division. Each member had parts of good and bad land, the division being such that the value of each share's land would be equal to that of every one's share.
Bigha	Standard one in the western provinces. 3,025 sq. yds. 5/8 of an acre.
Fasli	A calender originating with Akbar in the Christian year 1555. That year was Hijri 963 and samvat 1612. He deducted 649 years from the latter so as to coincide with Hijri 963 and called it fasli. To synchronise the christian with the fasli 592 years should be deducted from the former. For instance 1801 A.D. would be equal to 1209 fasli.
Jagir	Revenue of land assigneed to military servants. Latter on applied to assignments on account of loyalty or service performed to the state.
Jama	Land revenue. Originally applied to land, revenue plus cesses.
Jamabandi	Statement of amount paid by raiyats to intermediaries in a village or the village - rent rolls, also applied to the district rent roll.
Kanungo	A village or district revenue officer who kept records of land and revenue and when required explained local practices and public regulations.
Khalsa	Revenue of that portion of land which was directly under state management.
Khasra	Fieldbook, result of survey showing fields and raiyats possession and their relation to zamindars.
Muafi	Land exempted from paying revenue to the Government. Such land was generally a

	small area assigned in lieu of service or granted for charitable or religious purpose.
Malguzari	A person who pays revenue for himself or on behalf of others to government or to a proprietor, or a holder under a 'proprietor' or the state.
Malguzari land	Land paying revenue to the Government or land assessed to revenue.
Pattidari	A form of joint land holding in which sharers hold land according to their ancestral shares. Each one had a portion of land expressed in bigha without reference to fertility of land. (Ancestral share governed according to the law of inheritance.
Raja	A title given to Hindus of rank by Muslim rulers or hereditary when descending from a prince.
Talug	A revenue sub-division comprising several villages.
Taluqdar	Holder of taluq. Taking a dependency, an estate or trace of land. In the western provinces he did not have proprietary rights over the entire taluq.
Zabti	Regular or detailed mode of assessment as developed under Akbar. Later on also used for crop paying at cash rates.
Zamindari	An occupant of land or land holder other than a peasant.

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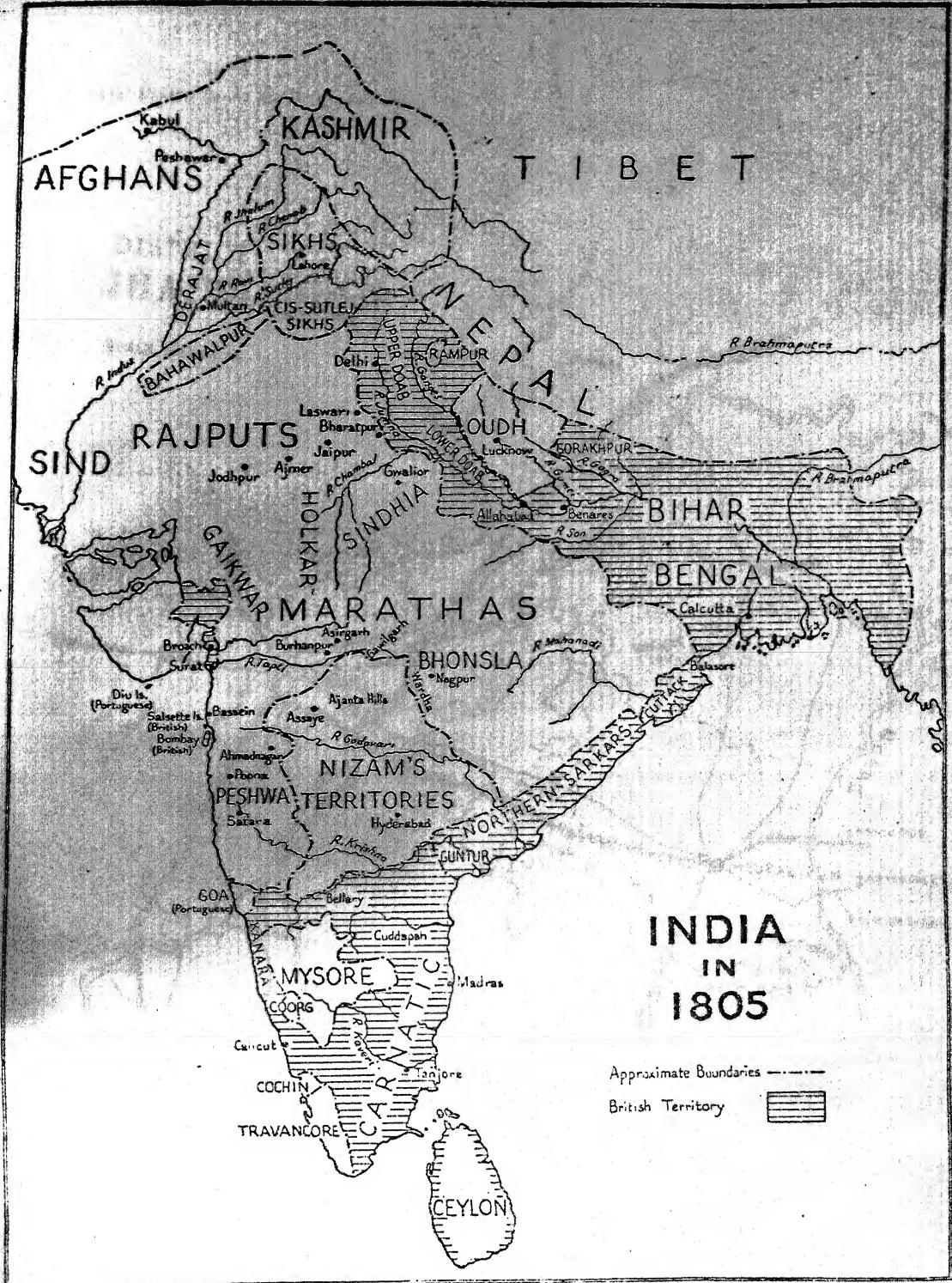
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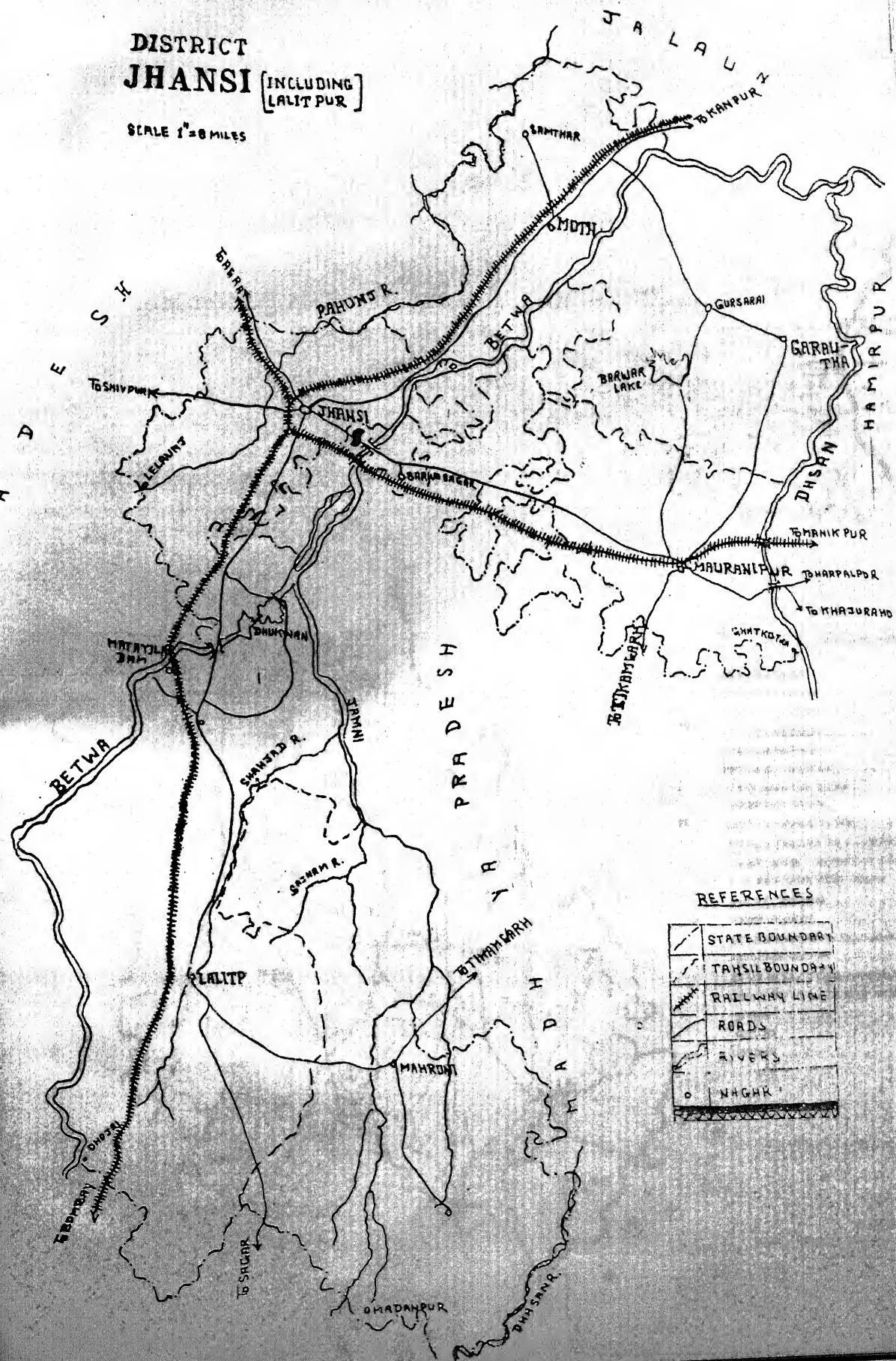
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Edgeworth, M.P.  
(Collector of Banda : J.A.S. Bengal XIX 1850.



**DISTRICT  
JHANSI (INCLUDING  
LALITPUR)**

SCALE 1"=8 MILES



REFERENCES

STATE BOUNDARY
TAHLIK BOUNDARY
RAILWAY LINE
ROADS
RIVERS
• NAGHR

# DISTRICT JHANSI

SCALE 1"=8 MILES

Compiled from Survey of India maps by courtesy  
of the Surveyor General of India



## REFERENCES

STATE BOUNDARY	.....
DISTRICT BOUNDARY	.....
TAHSIL BOUNDARY	.....
PARGANA BOUNDARY	.....
NATIONAL HIGHWAYS	.....
PROVINCIAL HIGHWAYS	.....
OTHER METALLISED ROADS	.....
UNMETALLISED ROADS	.....
RAILWAY—BROAD GAUGE	.....
TAHSIL & PARGANA HEADQUARTERS	□
CIRCUIT HOUSE / INSPECTION HOUSES	△
DAK BUNGLOW / REST HOUSE	○
RAILWAY STATIONS	□
POLICE STATIONS	○
DEVELOPMENT BLOCK HEADQUARTERS	□
IMPORTANT MANDIS	○
PLACE OF INDUSTRIAL IMPORTANCE	○
OTHER TOWNS & PLACES OF INTEREST	○
RIVERS	~~~~~
BRIDGES	—
FERRIES	—

R. P. = 1/506300

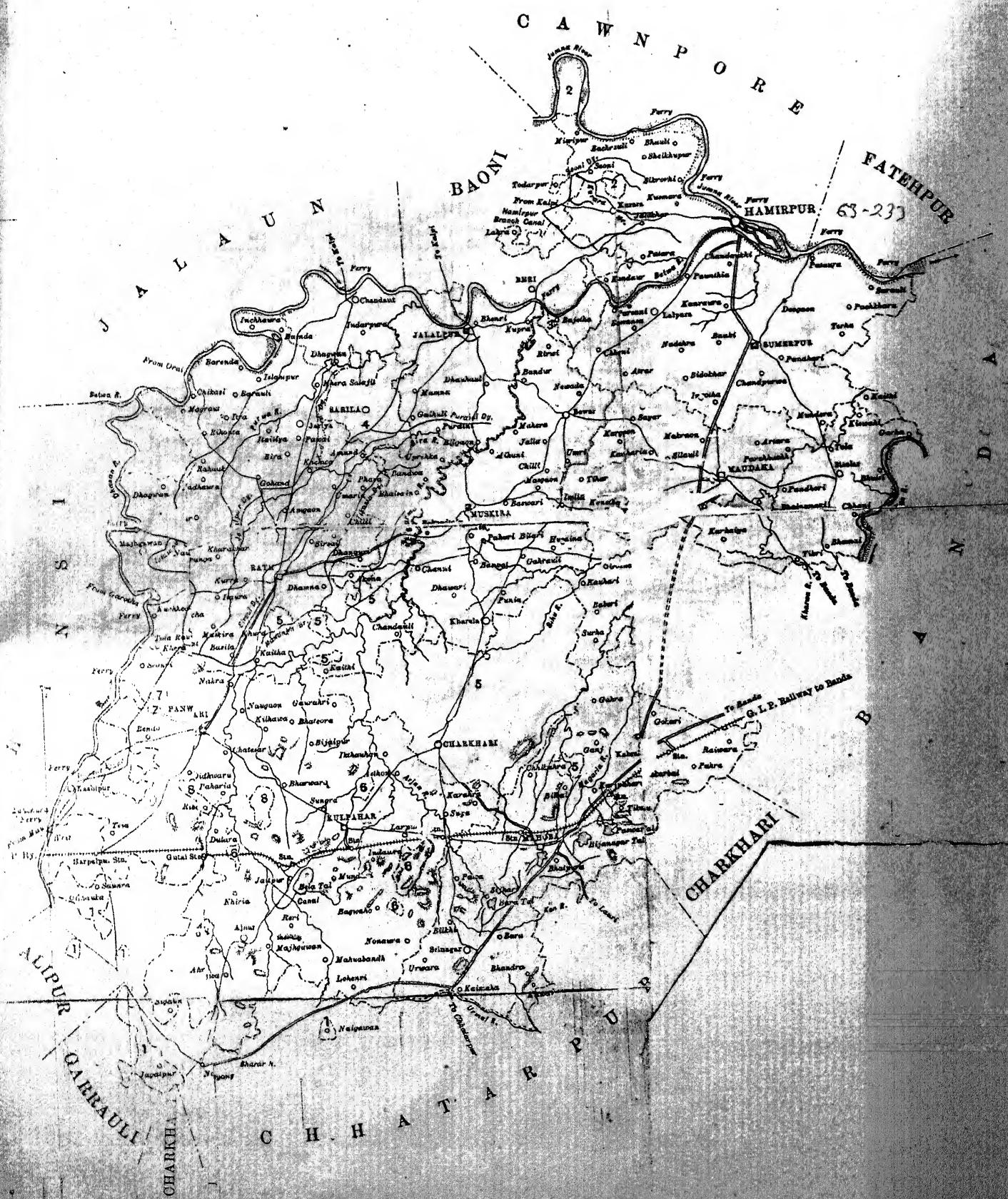
MILES

5 10 5 10

DISTRICT  
**HAMIRPUR.**

Scale—1 Inch = 8 Miles.

10      5      0      10 Miles.



Note.—The course of the Dhaun Canal is as proposed.

DISTRICT

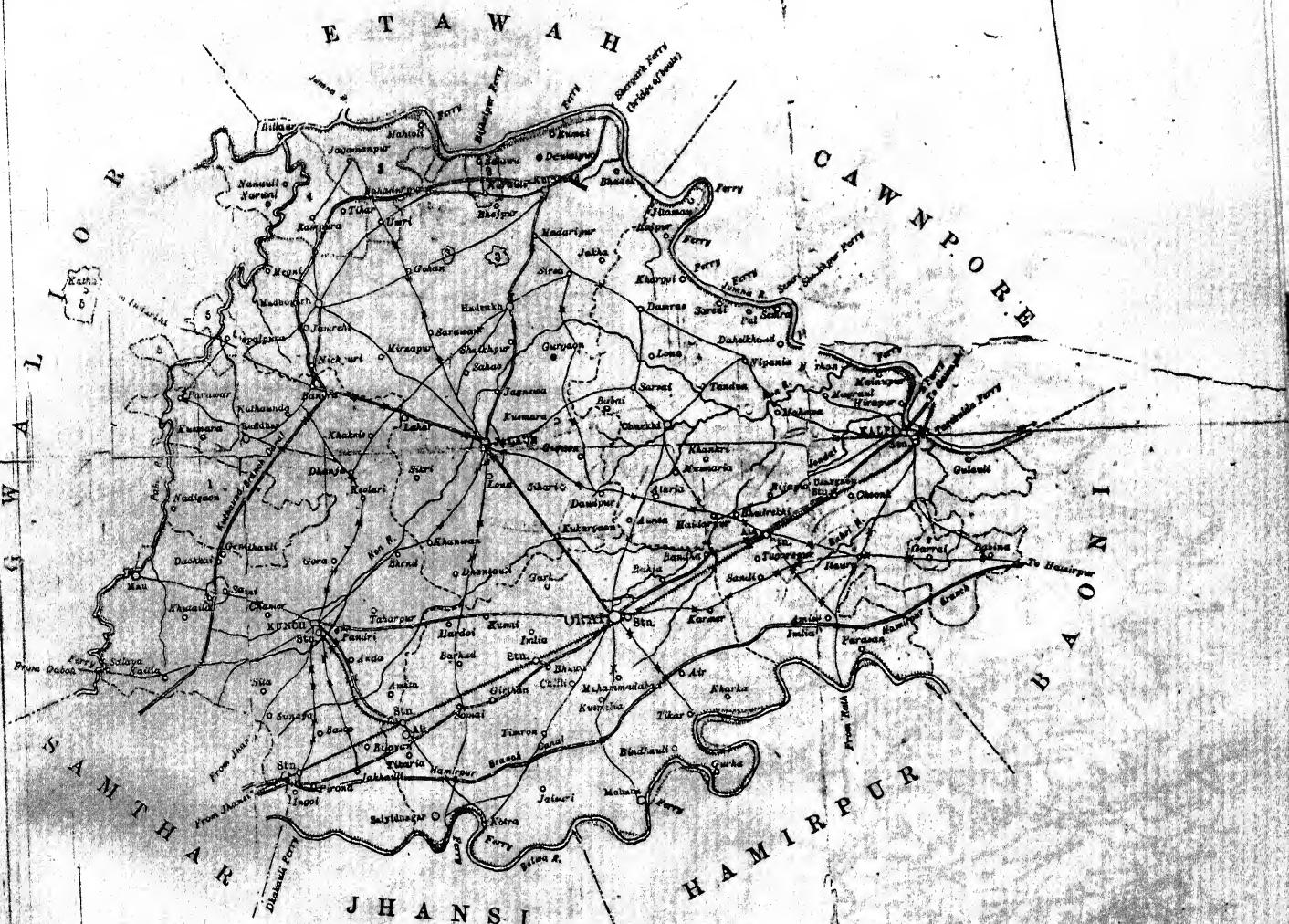
# JALAUN.

Scale—1 Inch = 8 Miles.

10

5

0



#### REFERENCES.

Chief Town ..... ORAI

DISTRICT  
**BANDA.**

Scale—1 Inch = 8 Miles.

10 5 0 10 Miles.

